volume
6
Skip
and
Loafer
story and art by
MISAKI
TAKAMATSU



Skip and Loafer 6

story & art by
Misaki Takamatsu


After the commotion of New Year's dies down, the city turns its attention to...
Deal!
Lowest Price
Valen-tine's Day.
st. Valentine's
Valentine's Chocolate Fair
Dessert



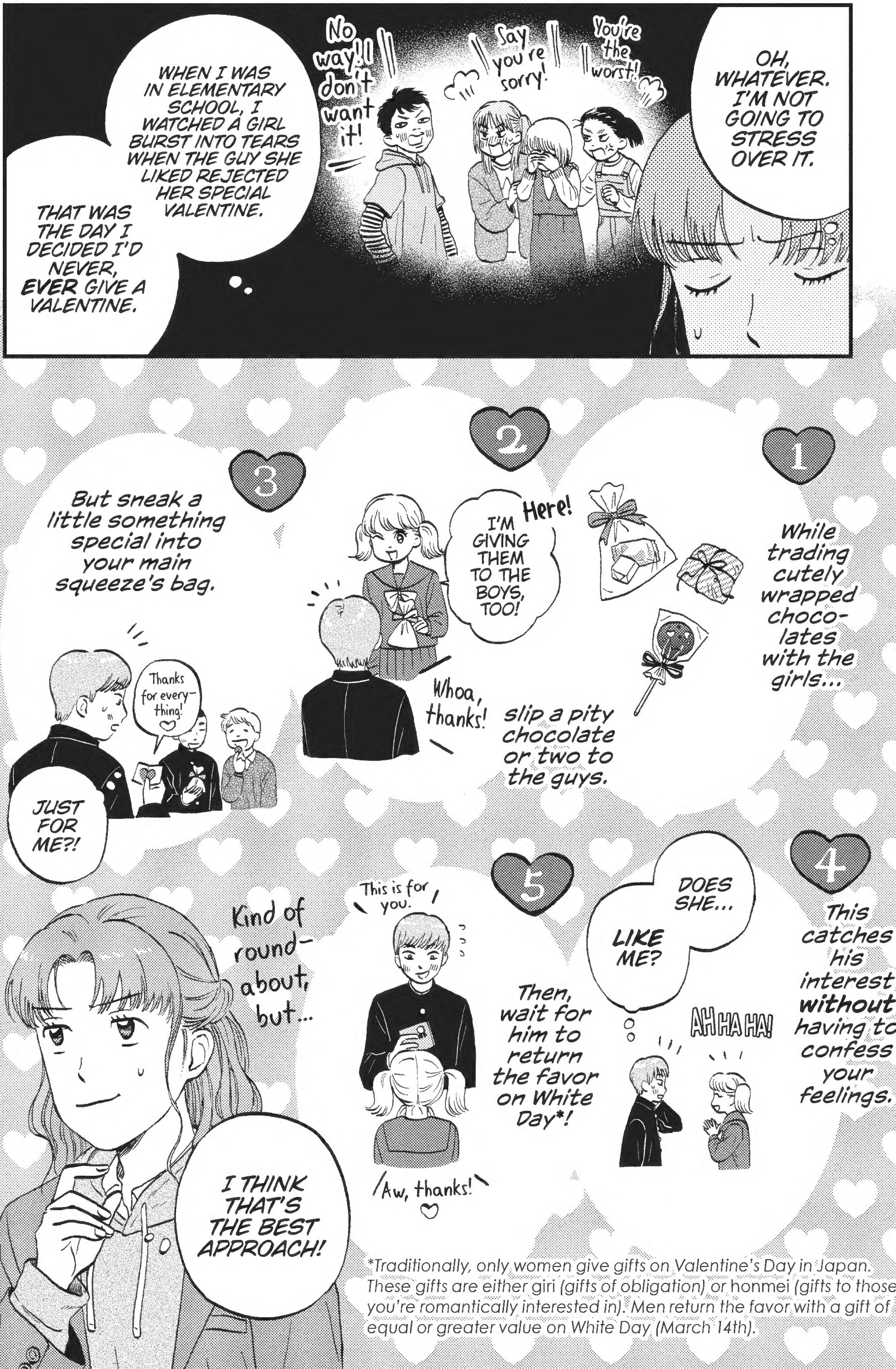




Scene ㉚ A Heart-Thumping Valentine's ⟨1⟩


NOW THAT THE TESTING PERIOD'S OVER, DOES ANYONE...
WANT TO TRADE HOMEMADE TREATS FOR VALENTINE'S DAY?!
SQUEE!
きゃっ
YOU KNOW I DO!
SQUEE!
きゃ
BUT CHOCOLATIERS MAKE THE TASTIEST CHOCOLATES.
FLAVOR'S NOT THE POINT, MAKOTO.
I'M ALL IN! ♡
HEE HEE HEE!
I HAVEN'T BEEN EXCITED FOR VALENTINE'S SINCE JUNIOR HIGH.
Yup.
SAME HERE.
IT'S BASICALLY JUST FOR GIRLS TO SWAP TREATS...
AND COUPLES TO SHOW OFF, YOU KNOW?
AIN'T THAT THE TRUTH.
HA HA HA HA!
HEY GUYS, WANNA DO A VALENDUDE'S DAY EXCHANGE?
YEAH, RIGHT.
And yet, no boy comes to school on February 14th without the painful knowledge of what that day celebrates.


Coed events like school festivals and sports days help people find out if sparks fly.
Contrary to popular belief, hardly any girls confess their feelings on Valentine's Day.
Without that, confessing on Valentine's Day is risky.
Only the bravest of the brave.
I'M SO EXCITED~!
I'M SETTING THE BAR PRET-TY HIGH FOR MYSELF!
I'M SURE THIS WON'T DUPLICATE WHAT THE REST OF YOU ARE BRINGING.
HEH HEH!
AND THEN THERE'S MITSUMI.
OOH!
I KNOW WHAT I'M MAKING~!
THE GIRL'S ROMANCE-ILLITERATE.
BUT COURAGE? SHE'S GOT THAT IN SPADES.
I THINK SHE'LL GIVE SOME KIND OF GIFT TO SHIMA-KUN...
BUT I DOUBT SHE'D ACTUALLY ASK HIM OUT. OR...WOULD SHE?!



*Traditionally, only women give gifts on Valentine's Day in Japan. These gifts are either giri (gifts of obligation) or honmei (gifts to those you're romantically interested in). Men return the favor with a gift of equal or greater value on White Day (March 14th).

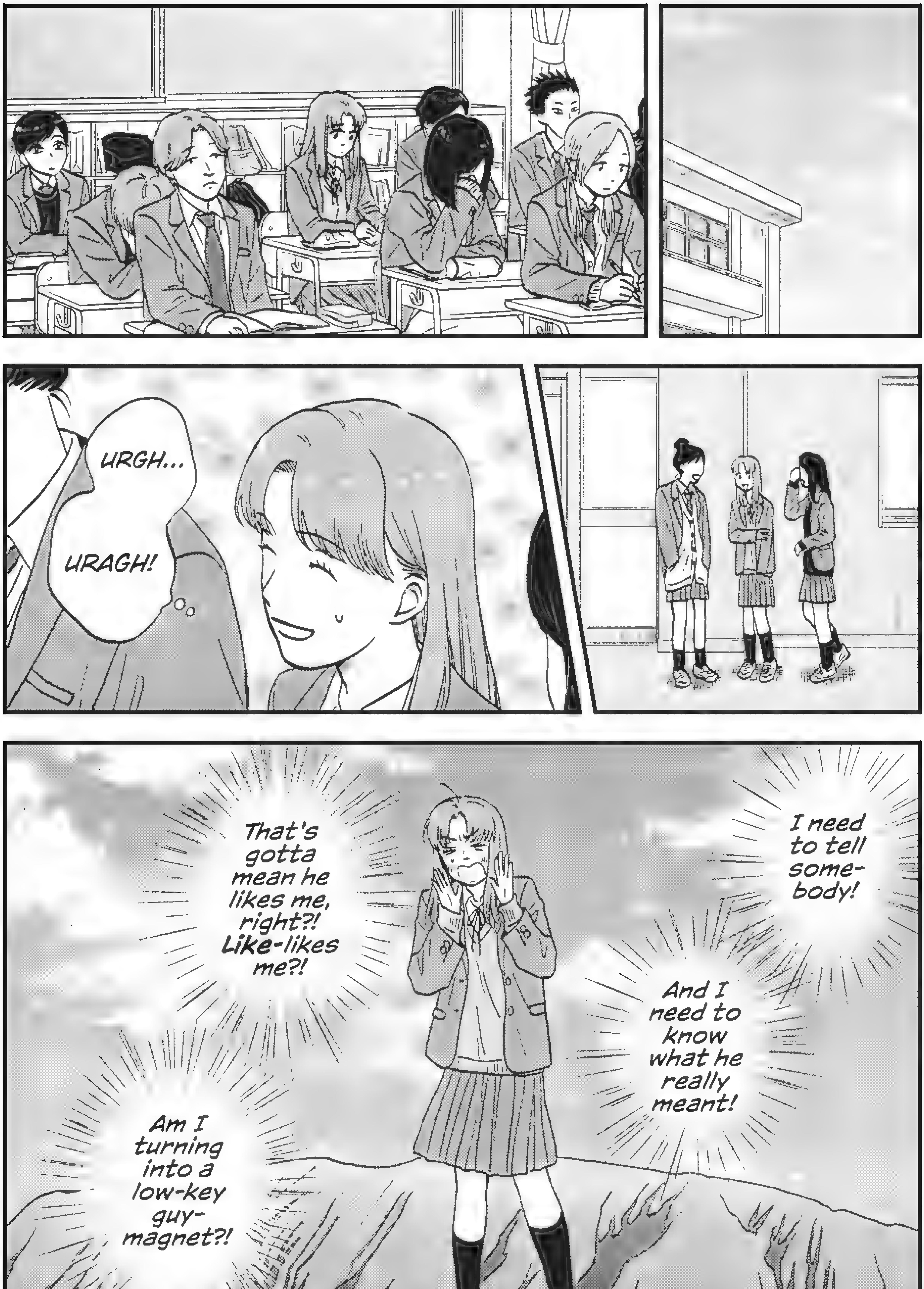

YOU WANT TO SEE WHAT EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING TOO, OBVIOUSLY.
NEXT WEEK, WE'LL PLAY BOARD GAMES IN ENGLISH.
SEE YOU THEN!
CAN YOU BELIEVE IT'S ALREADY FEBRUARY?
RIGHT? WENT BY IN A FLASH.
......
COLD DAY, HUH?
YUP.


HEY, EGASHIRA.
DO YOU WANNA GIVE ME A VALENTINE?
HA HA...
JUST KIDDING.


WHA...
WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT? TRYING TO BUILD UP YOUR NUMBERS, HUH?
AH HA HA!
YEAH, SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
THAT'S TOO FUNNY.
WELL, YOU'RE IN LUCK! I'M MASS-PRODUCING VALENTINES THIS YEAR...
SO IF YOU'RE GOOD WITH THAT, I CAN TOTALLY HOOK YOU UP.
ALL RIGHT!
THANKS!
SORRY TO RUN, BUT I HAVE TO TURN IN THE CLASS JOURNAL.
R-RIGHT.
SEE YOU LATER.



Omigod. Omigod, omigod, omigod.
KA-TNK
Was that what I think it was? It had to be, right?!
KA-TNK
Obuchi-kun's a member of my English Conversation Club and he's in the class next door.
Please tell them I forgot!
You got it! I'll let them kno
What're you up to, Egashira?
He texts me pretty often and always Likes my Insta posts, so I suspected he might have a thing for me, but... Wow. Suspicion confirmed, I guess.
It's not like he confessed to me though, right?
Maybe I should just, like, not think about it.


URGH...
URAGH!
That's gotta mean he likes me, right?! Like-likes me?!
I need to tell somebody!
And I need to know what he really meant!
Am I turning into a low-key guy-magnet?!


I WUSSED OUT MIDWAY, AND NOW IT'S JUST... UUUGH.
YEAH!
I TRIED TO PLAY IT COOL, BUT I THINK I CAME ON TOO STRONG.
OUCH.
Earth Science Club.
English Club.
WAIT.
THAT EGASHIRA?
What's your sign, Shima-kun?
You're a Cancer? Cool.
BUT I'M PRETTY SURE EGASHIRA'S INTO...
WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT HER? EGASHIRA, I MEAN.
HUH?
GOSH, UHHH...
I LIKE HOW SOMETIMES SHE BRAIDS IT AND SOMETIMES WEARS IT IN A BUN.
?
"IT"?


HER HAIR, YOU KNOW?
I GUESS I LIKE GIRLY GIRLS WHO PLAY WITH THEIR HAIR AND STUFF.
UH... HUH.
I HAVE TO HAND IT TO YOU, OBUCCHI.
YOU'VE GOT GUTS!
THANKS.
AND IT MIGHT STILL WORK OUT. YOU NEVER KNOW.
1 — 3
VRRT


HEY, YUNA.
WUDDUP, GIRL! CAN YA TALK?
SURE. WHAT'S UP?
LITERALLY NOTHING.
I'M STILL AT SCHOOL FINISHING UP SOME STUFF.
OOPS. WANT ME TO HANG UP?
NAH. NO ONE'S HERE, SO IT'S FINE.
AND SHE THREW HANDS OVER THAT?! NO WAY.
YES WAY.
NOT SURPRISED. SHE'S BEEN A FIGHTER SINCE JUNIOR HIGH.
SO, WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?
NADA. NOTHING MUCH, ANYWAY.
EXCEPT, YESTER-DAY...
OOH, YESTER-DAY?
SINCE SHE DOESN'T GO TO SCHOOL HERE, I CAN PROBABLY TELL HER.


YOU THINK SO TOO?!
OH YEAH. HE TOTALLY WANTS YOU!
SOUNDS LIKE HE'S PLAYING IT SAFE, THOUGH.
I KNOW!
IF ONLY HE'D LEFT IT AT, "DO YOU WANT TO GIVE ME A VALEN-TINE?"
WELCOME TO POPULARITY, SISTAH!
DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC.
BUT HE WAS LIKE, "JUST KIDDING!" AND I...

UH, GOTTA GO. PHONE'S DYING. CALL YOU BACK LATER.
YEP. LATER.
Came back because he forgot something.
AWKWARD


HEY.
HAVE YOU EVER CONFESSED TO A GUY YOU LIKE?
THAT WAS PRETTY CRAPPY OF YOU.
BET YOU HAVEN'T.

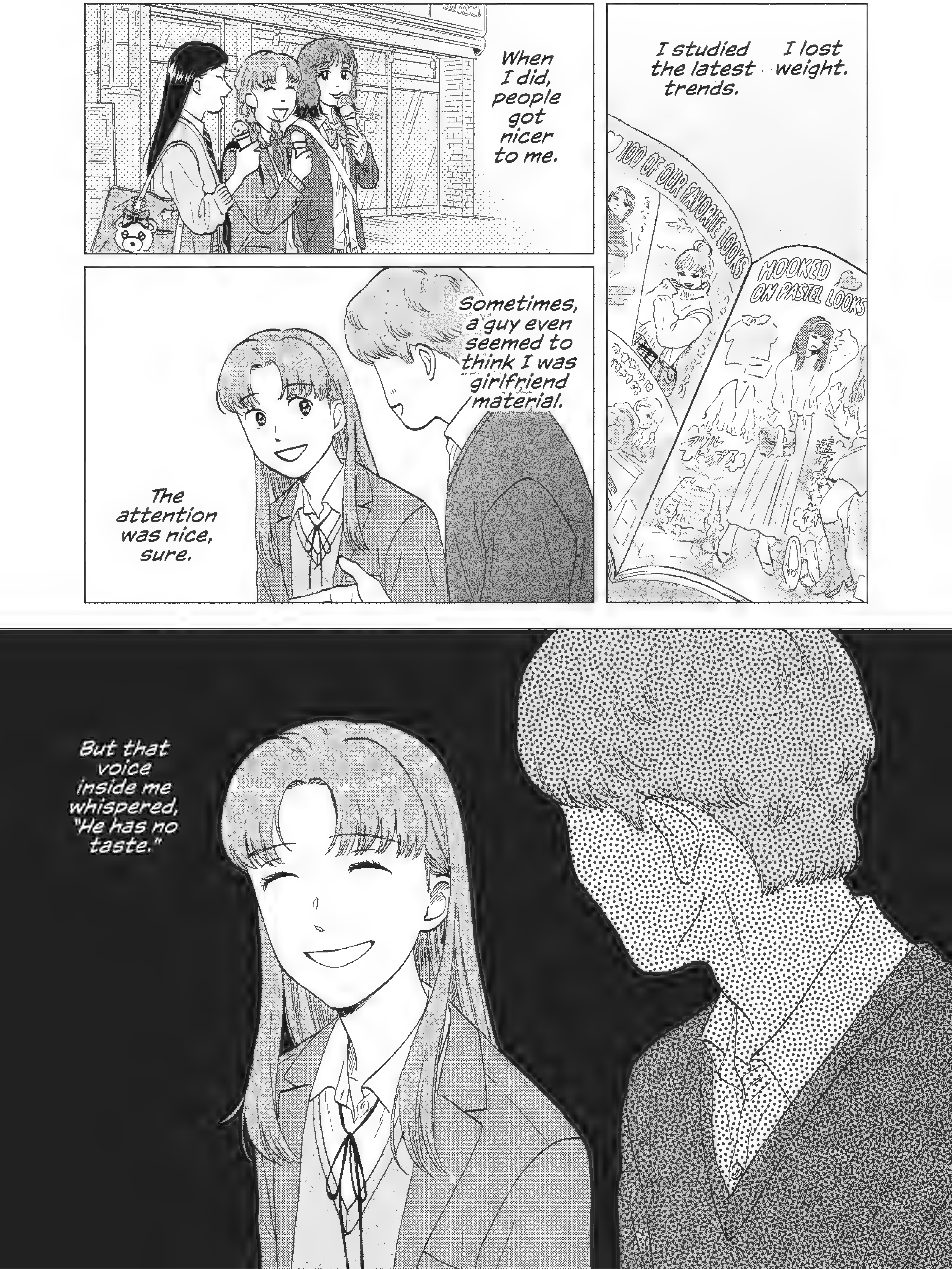

I'M NOT GOING TO KNOCK YOU FOR HAVING PRIDE.
BUT THAT DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO LOOK DOWN ON PEOPLE.
YOU DON'T KNOW...
THE FIRST THING ABOUT ME!

WHUMP
I HATE...
TALKING TO GIRLS.
SIGH
SCREW HIM!


AS IF HE...
milyMart
HAS ANY RIGHT TO TALK!
SNATCH
CHOCOLATE FRAPPE
PROTEIN
AFTER LISTENING IN ON MY PHONE CALL!
VRRM
BESIDES, THE ONLY WAY HE'D KNOW ABOUT THAT WAS IF OBUCHI BLABBED!
WHICH MEANS THOSE BOYS WERE GOSSIPING BEHIND MY BACK, TOO!


HOW WAS IT NOT COMPLETELY OBVIOUS THAT I WAS JOKING AROUND WITH A FRIEND...
'CAUSE IT FELT WEIRD THAT SOMEONE MIGHT HAVE A THING FOR ME?!
HE HAS NO IDEA HOW HARD I'VE WORKED TO KEEP PEOPLE FROM MAKING FUN OF ME!
I'VE CHANGED MY APPEARANCE!
MY SPEECH, MY BEHAVIOR!
ガ SHAKK
シャ


AS IF I DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW IT'S MAKING ME INTO A WORSE AND WORSE PERSON EVERY DAY.
ゴト
THUK
カシャ
KRAKK
キーン
SNAP


I lost weight.
I studied the latest trends.
100 OF OUR FAVORITE LOOKS
HOOKED ON PASTEL LOOKS
When I did, people got nicer to me.
Sometimes, a guy even seemed to think I was girlfriend material.
The attention was nice, sure.
But that voice inside me whispered, "He has no taste."


When I knew I had it bad for Shima-kun, I finally realized...
I'm attracted to kind, clever people.
Guys who are consider-ate...
tuned into those around them.
The kind of guy who would see **straight through**...
my shallow façade.


And that's why...
the guys I like will never like me back.


NEVER EVER, THOUGH?
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT.
I WON'T.


......
DOINK
MUKAI.


TODAY...
I'M GOING TO TELL SHIMA-KUN...
THAT I LIKE HIM.
Read
Can we talk after school tomorrow?
Sure~!
Scene 30 END



Scene ㉛ A Heart-Thumping Valentine's ⟨2⟩


IF ONLY HE'D LEFT IT AT, "DO YOU WANT TO GIVE ME A VALENTINE?"
GROSS.
PEOPLE LIKE HER...
LISTEN.
ALWAYS RUSH TO MAKE FUN OF THE UNDER-DOGS.
WHAT GIVES HER THE RIGHT?
TODAY...


I'M GOING TO TELL SHIMA-KUN...
THAT I LIKE HIM.
...
O... KAAAY?
WAIT, YOU'RE WHAT?! IS IT BECAUSE OF WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY?!
HEY, I WASN'T TRYING TO BE A MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER! YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT?!
RIGHT?!
OF COURSE I DO. I'M NOT STUPID.
WELL, UH... ALL RIGHT.
THEN WHY SHOULD I CARE?
GOOD... GOOD LUCK.


QUICK QUESTION.
YEAH?
WELL... BYE?
ス SCOOT
スス… SCOOT SCOOT
UH...WAS THERE ANYTHING ELSE?!
....
WOULD A GUY...
UH...

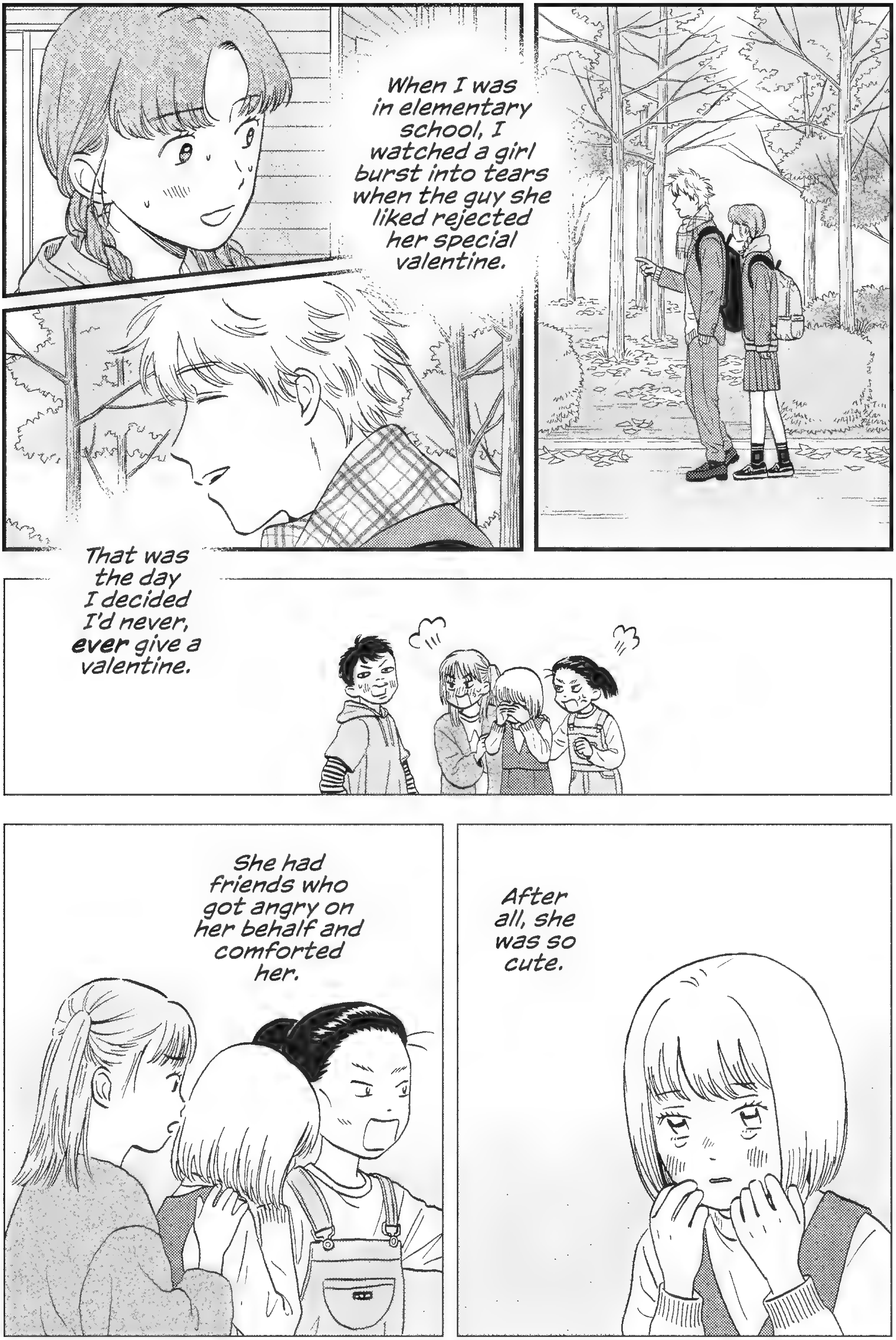

WOULD IT GROSS A GUY OUT TO RECEIVE CHOCOLATE FROM ME...?
WHA...?
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA. *WHAT?*


OF COURSE NOT!
NO WAY!
LOOK, IF A GUY DUMPS YOU IN THE CRAPPIEST POSSIBLE WAY...
THEN THAT'S HIS PROBLEM!
MOST PEOPLE WOULD BE *AMAZED* SOMEBODY ELSE LIKED THEM THAT WAY.
SO, *UH*, THE AVERAGE GUY WOULD BE PSYCHED, I...
I... THINK.


THANKS, MUKAI.
HA HA!
YEAH...? MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.
THE HECK WAS THAT?
No way! I can't even.
What?
Huh?
What? No way. Too funny.
EGASHIRA'S SUPPOSED TO BE TOUGH...
AND LOOK DOWN ON PEOPLE, RIGHT?!
WHAT'S WITH THE SUDDEN PERSON-ALITY SHIFT?


WAIT, NO...I GET IT NOW.
PEOPLE WITH TRUE CONFIDENCE DON'T **NEED** TO LOOK DOWN ON OTHER PEOPLE.
INSTEAD OF MAKING SWEEPING GENERALIZA-TIONS...
MAYBE I SHOULD'VE SAID SPECIFI-CALLY...
"NO, THAT WOULDN'T GROSS ANYONE OUT"?
"WOULD IT GROSS A GUY OUT?"
SHOOT.


はー…
HAA...
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO KNOW?
CAFÉ LATTE
SORRY I'M LATE.
YOU COULD'VE WAITED FOR ME INSIDE, WHERE IT'S WARM!


When I was in elementary school, I watched a girl burst into tears when the guy she liked rejected her special valentine.
That was the day I decided I'd never, **ever** give a valentine.
She had friends who got angry on her behalf and comforted her.
After all, she was so cute.


If someone could be that cruel to her...
what would they do to me?
Just thinking about it gives me a mild panic attack.
GULP!
HEY, SHIMA-KUN.


HERE.
IT'S A LITTLE EARLY, BUT I MADE YOU A VALENTINE.
I WOULDN'T DARE GIVE IT TO YOU ON THE ACTUAL DAY...
BUT, UM...
W-WOULD YOU ACCEPT IT?
OH... AH...


WOOOW.
THANK YOU.
I...
AH...


I LIKE YOU, SHIMA-KUN.
I'M SORRY.


THANK YOU, EGASHIRA-SAN.
BUT I CAN'T SEE US...
EVER BEING MORE THAN FRIENDS.
AH HA!
OH, SURE.
I KNEW THAT!
I MEAN, I KIND OF THOUGHT SO.
BUT YOU ACCEPTED MY PRESENT. THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME.
THANKS!


OH! BY THE WAY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WAS THINKING, BUT THEY'RE HOMEMADE.
IF YOU DON'T LIKE THEM...
JUST THROW THEM AWAY!
AH HA!
I WOULD NEVER DO THAT.


THEY'RE HOME-MADE, HUH?
THANK YOU.
WELL, I'LL...SEE YOU AROUND.
YUP!
SEE YOU AT SCHOOL.


AND JUST LIKE THAT...
IT'S OVER.
IF YOU CALL A GUY AND HE MEETS YOU...
THEN CONFESSING YOUR FEELINGS IS EASY.
JUST OPEN YOUR MOUTH AND LET THE WORDS SPILL OUT, HUH?
SO EASY A MORON COULD DO IT.


EVERY COUPLE LOOKS LIKE A WALKING MIRACLE TO ME NOW.
WOW.
I'M SO GLAD MY CHOCOLATES DIDN'T GROSS HIM OUT.
HE LISTENED TO ME SO SERIOUSLY, TOO.
HA HA... YEAH.
HE'S A SWEET GUY, SHIMA-KUN.
THE GUY I LIKED WAS ONE OF THE GOOD ONES, AFTER ALL.
AT LEAST I HAVE TASTE.
HA HA.


I'M SO GLAD.
I AM AL- LOWED...
TO FALL IN LOVE...




HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAAAY!
DID EVERYBODY BRING THEIR HANDMADE TREATS?
OF COURSE!
OKAY! NOW, BAGS OPEN!
TA-DA!
じゃん!
I MADE BROWNIES WITH COOKIES ON TOP! ♡
I MADE CUP-CAKES. ♡


SHWP
スッ
OOH! ♡ MAKOTO MADE CUTE LOLIPO-- WAIT, WHAT?
GNARLY-POPS...
みっちり...
The standard chocolate lollipops versus...
THAT THING'S A *MONSTER!*
I'VE DUBBED THEM "DIET DESTROYERS".
MITSUMI, WHAT DID YOU...?
TOKAKU
CHOCOLATE FAVORITES
MILK
OH, COME ON!!
IT WAS YOUR ROOTIN' TOOTIN' IDEA!
AAAHH!
あーっ
STOP! I CAN EXPLAIN!!



Daifuku are made of mochi (rice dough), typically filled with a sweet filling like adzuki beans.




Here!
AND THAT'S WHY YOU'RE GETTING STORE-BOUGHT CHOCOLATE!
AWW, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE.
MAYBE A QUICK ZAP IN THE MICROWAVE WOULD SAVE THEM.
GLAD THE GIRLS ARE HAVING FUN...
バチッ
BRZAP
HERE'S ONE FOR YOU, YAMADA-KUN.
TOKAKU
CHOCOLATE FAVORITES
MILK


YO, FOR REAL?! THANK YOU, IWAKURA-SAN!
I'LL SAVOR EVERY BITE!
YOU'RE WEL-COME.
YOU REALLY WANTED CHOCOLATE TODAY, HUH, YAMADA?
AH HA HA!
HERE, YOU CAN HAVE THIS, TOO.
HUH?!
HERE'S ONE FROM ME, TOO!
NO WAAAY!



THIS IS THE BEST. VALENTINE'S DAY. EVER.
That's so nice.
Good for him.
THANK YOU, EVERY-ONE.
Haff!
Haff!
ONE FOR YOU!
THANKS.
CHOCOLATE FAVORITES
MILK


AND ONE FOR YOU!
THANKS!
Here you go!
Thanks!
THAT'S A FRIEND CHOCOLATE IF I EVER SAW ONE.
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT.



Scene ㉜ Snippity-Snip Sweet Sixteen


SO, NEXT WEEK, SCHOOL GROUNDS ARE CLOSED FOR THE ADMISSION EXAMS.
ADMISSION
入学者
選 EXAMS 抜
BUT DON'T TREAT IT LIKE A VACATION!
USE THIS TIME TO STUDY FOR YOUR YEAR-END EXAMS!
YEAR-END
学年末
テスト
EXAMS



EACH AND EVERY WORD HERALDED THE END OF OUR TIME AS FIRST-YEARS. BRR.
UGH, I KNOW.
THE THIRD-YEARS GRADUATE IN MARCH.
OOF!
THEN IT'S SPRING BREAK. THEN WE'RE SECOND-YEARS...IN DIFFERENT CLASSES.
OW!
I HOPE WE END UP IN THE SAME CLASS AGAIN.
OUR GRADES ARE SPLIT UP INTO SIX CLASSES, THOUGH.
......
STUDY PARTY?!
AAAHH!
わっ
YES, PLEASE!!
LET'S JUST... MEET UP AS MUCH AS WE CAN UNTIL THEN!!


OH! BUT THERE'S ONE MORE HAPPY EVENT COMING FIRST!
YEAH? AND WHAT'S THAT?
<MY BIRTHDAY!>
Ohhh—...
IT MIGHT BE RUDE TO STAY TOO LONG AT A RESTAURANT, RIGHT?
WHY DON'T WE STUDY AT THE KARAOKE PARLOR?
OOH, YEAH! WE CAN MEET UP FOR LUNCH, THEN TAKE IT TO THE KARAOKE BOX.
BUT WOULD A BOX BE BIG ENOUGH FOR FOUR?
IWAKURA-SAN! IWAKURA-SAN!


You could rent one of the big rooms if you included us!
Oooh
I'D LOVE TO COME, BUT...
OH, COME ON! WE WON'T HAVE MANY CHANCES TO GET TOGETHER AFTER THIS.
JOIN US!
WELL... OKAY.


HANG ON...
I'VE SPENT LOTS OF TIME WITH MY GIRL-FRIENDS LATELY...
but I haven't met up with Shima-kun since summer break!!
IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A STUDY PARTY, SO I NEVER EVEN PICKED AN OUTFIT.
AND THEY'VE ALREADY SEEN ME IN MY FAVORITE SWEATER.
NAO-CHAN!
バタ PATTER
バタ PATTER
YEEES?


PRESTO!
MY BUTTON-UP SHIRT HAS BECOME A CUTE SHIRT-DRESS.
OOOOH!
THIS WILL GO WITH YOUR SCHOOL BAG AND LOAFERS PERFECTLY!
YOU'RE AMAZING, NAO-CHAN!
ARE YOU MAGIC?!
OH, HUSH.
カチャ CHAK
HEE HEE...
TOMORROW I'LL APPLY THE BB CREAM I BOUGHT BEFORE...
AND WEAR MATCHING LIP GLOSS.
HEE HEE.
YUP.
THAT'S ALL KINDSA CUTE.


I'M STARTING TO REALLY ENJOY THIS STUFF!
FASHION'S KINDA FUN!
WHILE I'M AT IT, MAYBE I'LL SHAPE MY EYEBROWS.
PLUCK
PLUCK
PERFECT!
AH. MY BANGS ARE STARTING TO FALL INTO MY EYES.
I'LL TRIM THEM UP A TEENY-TINY BIT!
SNIP
チャキ
チャキ
SNIP
YEAH. YEAH! JUST LIKE THAT!


Sorry. I'm running a little bit behind. Go in without me.
MITSUMI'S *LATE?* NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE THE DAY.
ISN'T THAT HER OVER THERE?
HUH?


THAT'S HER, ALL RIGHT. I'D KNOW THAT DEFEATED SLUMP ANYWHERE.
MITSUMI!
FLINCH
WHOA, WHOA!
MI-TSUMI!
SCUTTLE
SCUTTLE
SCUTTLE
GRASP
WHY ARE YOU ZIPPING AROUND LIKE...


BWA HA!
WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED TO YOUR BANGS?!
DID YOU CUT THEM YOURSELF?!
AH HA HA!
Uhh...
I-I SNEEZED WHILE TRIMMING 'EM A LITTLE BIT, SO I CUT THEM, UM...A LOTTA BIT.
THE MORE I TRIED TO BALANCE THEM, THE SHORTER THEY GOT...
HA
HA
HA!
OKAY, BUT EVEN STILL!
They're so choppy!
YOU KNOW NAO-SAN WOULD'VE HELPED YOU, RIGHT?
HA
HA!
BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO WAKE HER UP.
ANYWAY, SHE LEFT EARLY FOR A PHOTOSHOOT, SO...
HA HA HA!
OOH, THAT'S ROUGH, BUDDY.


Snerk...
OOGH ...
CRAP. SHE'S CRYING.
OH NO! WE'RE SO SORRY!
I ALMOST WASN'T GONNA COME...
B-BUT I WANTED TO STUDY WITH EVERY-ONE...
HEY, HEY, WE KNOW. SHH, IT'S OKAY. WE'RE SORRY.
DON'T WORRY. THEY'LL GROW BACK IN NO TIME!
OH HEY! YOU CAN BORROW MY BERET!
She's crying?!
Over bangs...!?!
(The boys are screaming internally.)


THERE! THAT'S A CUTE LOOK FOR YOU.
スン… SNIFF
YEAH, MITSUMI! YOU LOOK GREAT. THE COLOR EVEN WEIRDLY MATCHES YOUR OUTFIT!
MM...
THANK YOU, MIKA-CHAN.
YOU CAN WEAR IT HOME TODAY IF YOU WANT.
AND ASK NAO-SAN TO FIX YOU UP.
OKAY. I WILL.
OH MAN. GUESS EGASHIRA'S ONE OF THE GOOD ONES AFTER ALL.
NOW I FEEL LIKE A JERK.
チク STAB
チク STAB
GUILT


WHO ORDERED THE SPICY CHICKEN?
THAT'S ME!
WE ATE IN A RESTAURANT TOGETHER WHEN SCHOOL STARTED, TOO. REMEMBER?
YEAH! FOR THE MOVIE!
KARAOKE CAME A BIT BEFORE THAT, HUH?
NEVER WOULDA GUESSED YOU GUYS WOULD CLICK THE WAY YOU DID.
SAME HERE.
TOOK US BY SURPRISE TOO, DIDN'T IT?
YEAH.


I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE FRIENDS WITH MUKAI, THE DASH-HOME KING.
THE WHAT NOW?
OR THAT SOUSUKE WOULD JOIN THE DRAMA CLUB.
OH, RIGHT, THE DRAMA CLUB! YOU ENDED UP JOINING THAT?
OH... YEAH, I DID.
ARE YOU REHEARSING ANYTHING NOW?
THE FIRST-YEAR WELCOMING PERFORMANCE.
YOU'LL BE IN IT?! I'LL COME WATCH YOU!
HA HA...
THAT MAKES ME WEIRDLY NERVOUS.


JUST LIKE YOU GIRLS CLICKING THE WAY YOU DID.
ONCE YOU HIT THAT GROOVE, IT JUST... WORKED, YOU KNOW?
HEY, I SAID I DIDN'T THINK IT'D HAPPEN, NOT THAT IT DIDN'T FEEL RIGHT!
I DIDN'T PREDICT IT, BUT I COULDN'T SEE IT ANY OTHER WAY NOW!
Heh heh...
SOOO, CAN WE KEEP MEETING UP LIKE THIS EVEN IF WE WIND UP IN DIFFERENT CLASSES?
Total non sequitur, dude.
AND HE WAS DOING SO WELL FOR A SEC.


SURE!
I'D LIKE THAT.
OOH!
NICE AND ROOMY.
WE CAN GET LOADS OF STUDYING DONE HERE.
YEAH, LOOKS GOOD.
LIVEJAM
LIVEJAM


LEMME DO JUST ONE SONG...
"JUST ONE" IS HOW IT ALWAYS STARTS!
THEN ONE MORE...THEN ANOTHER... AND ANOTHER!
BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, YOU'RE HOOKED AND YOU CAN'T STOP!
DUDES, I GET IT! DON'T MAKE ME SOUND LIKE AN ADDICT!
OHH... SO HERE YOU SUBSTITUTE X FOR...
DID ANYONE BRING STICKY NOTES?
Next



Studious.
I COULDN'T SEE PAST THE BANGS AT FIRST...
BUT IS MITSUMI-CHAN WEARING THE TIIINIEST BIT OF MAKEUP?
つや DAZZLE
つや DAZZLE
AND WAIT, AREN'T HER CLOTHES REALLY STYLISH TODA--
パチッ BRZZAP
サッ SHWIP
?


I REFLEXIVELY LOOKED AWAY!
GLOOM
がーん
WAS HE STARING AT MY FOREHEAD?
UGHHH, MY BRAIN HURTS.
I GOT SO MUCH WORK DONE!
I GUESS STUDY GROUPS CAN BE KIND OF NICE SOMETIMES.
LET'S TRY THIS ONE... SEIJITSU!
Uh...
<SINCERE>!
RIGHT!
POINTS FOR THE ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLUB.
Heh heh!


ガタン KA-TNK
プシュー PSHOO
ぎゅう CRUSH
UH-OH...
ぎゅう CRUSH
ガタン KA-TNK
....
ガタン KA-TNK
HEY, EGASHIRA.
I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY FOR THE OTHER DAY.
SORRY.


......
I COULD'VE BEEN LESS OF A JERK TOO, SO...
IT'S OKAY.
KOFF
YOU HATE TALKING TO GIRLS, DON'T YOU, MUKAI?
HAKK
SO HEY, QUICK OBSERVA-TION.
......!!!
LET'S BOTH WORK ON OUR-SELVES, 'KAY?
GLEAM
HEE HEE HEE!
OOOH! I JUST KNEW IT!
GLEAM


I HEAR YOUR BIRTHDAY'S COMING UP?
YUP!
MARCH THIRD.
IT FALLS SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF EXAMS, THOUGH.
SO, YOU'RE GONNA BE SIXTEEN TOO, HUH?
YES-SIR.
A MATURE, REFINED LADY.
WRIGGLE
GUESS SO.
NO, NO, THAT'S A GAG. THIS IS THE PART WHERE YOU LAUGH.
HUH?
BUT YOU HAVE GROWN UP.


EVEN THOUGH I CRIED OVER MY MESSED-UP BANGS?
YEAH.
EVEN THOUGH.
NOW ARRIVING AT...
ガタン
KATNK
EXCUSE ME! THIS IS MY STOP.


YOU GOT IT!
SMOOSH
きゅっ
プシュ
PSHOO
THE DOORS ARE NOW CLOSING.
HUH?
OH.
OOPS! SORRY. EVEN AFTER ALL THIS TIME...
I STILL RESPOND WHEN SOMEONE SAYS THEY'RE GETTING OFF BECAUSE I THINK THEY'RE TALKING TO ME.


I'VE BEEN EMBARRASSING MYSELF ALL DAY TODAY.
NOTHING WRONG WITH THAT, IS THERE?
IT MUST BE A "FRESH TO TOKYO" THING!
UHHH... I DUNNO ABOUT THAT.
HEH! HAH!
← From Nagano.
It's not.
↑ From Aomori.
Nope.
HEY, MITSUMI-CHAN...
UP UNTIL RECENTLY, I COULDN'T WAIT TO BE A GROWN-UP. BUT NOW...


NOW I THINK...WE SHOULD TAKE IT SLOW.


I'M NOT SURE I UNDER-STAND, BUT YEAH. LET'S DO THAT.
THANKS.
AH, YOUTH.
ARE THEY DATING?


REALLY?


Iwakura Mitsumi. Soon to be sixteen years old.
My current plan's to make the most of my youth.
I'M HOOOME!
WEL-COME BA--
A-CK!
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR BANGS?!
Right!
I FORGOT ABOUT THAT.

Scene 32 END



Scene ㉝ Happy-Go-Lucky Cake


HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MITSUMI-CHAN~!
FANKS, FUMI!
WHOA! YER BANGS ARE WICKED SHORT NOW!
I'LL TELL YOU THE STORY SOMEDAY.
YAAAWN
HA HA! STOP IT!
RATTLE
カララ
TELL ME NOOOW!
WELL...


YEAH! AND WHEN YOU CAN'T WAIT TO SEE 'EM...
AND YOU DRESS YOURSELF UP ALL FANCY--
CUT IT OUT.
HOW'S IT GOIN' WITH SHIMA-KUN, ANYHOW?
WHAT ABOUT HIM?
MORNING, NAO-CHAN.
CAN I GET YOU A DRINK?
KLATTA
MORNING, OMITSU~!
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'LL GET IT MYSELF.
Bye!


HAPPY BIRTHDAY. ♡
THANKS.
I'M SO SORRY I HAVE TO WORK LATE TONIGHT.
I'LL TREAT YOU TO SOMETHING NICE ANOTHER TIME.
ザー SHAA
IT'S OKAY. I'M STILL IN YEAR-END EXAMS!
AFTER I CLEAN UP MY DISHES, IT'S CHOP-CHOP! BACK TO STUDYING!
OH, BUT AFTER EXAMS ARE OVER TODAY...
ザー SHAA
MY FRIENDS AND I ARE STOPPING FOR CROQUETTES ON THE WAY HOME.
THEY'RE TREATING ME FOR MY BIRTH-DAY!
ガチャ TNK
カチャ CLINK
IT'S A POPULAR PLACE WITH THE KIDS IN ATHLETIC CLUBS.
CHEAP AND TASTY.
THAT SOUNDS LOVELY.


SEE YOU LATER!
OKAY.
LET'S GET TO WORK!







Banner: Butcher Shop




OKAY, AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO HAD TROUBLE WITH THE MATH PORTION?!
NOPE! I COULDN'T FINISH THE LAST QUESTION!
I'M SAVING ONE TO HAVE WITH MY CURRY TONIGHT.
THEY'RE REALLY TASTY.
STEAM


HAVE A GOOD NIGHT!




Sign and Lantern: Izakaya


SORRY I'M LATE.
GORO-CHAN!
THANKS FOR ACCEPTING MY LAST-SECOND INVITE.
OOLONG HIGHBALL, PLEASE!
TINK
CHEEEERS!
TO A HARD DAY'S WORK!
WANT TO ORDER THE STEW?
THEIR HOUSE RECIPE'S TO *DIE* FOR.
I'M MORE IN THE MOOD FOR A ROLLED OMELET.
COULD I GET A REFILL, PLEASE?
You got it!
SO, ONE OF THOSE DAYS, HUH?
HM?
A CHEAT DAY.
BFFT!!


Hee hee hee!
NAILED IT!
IT JUST SOUNDS SO FUNNY WHEN YOU SAY IT, GORO-CHAN.
HEY, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THAT WAS UNTIL YOU TOLD ME.
What's a cheat day? Diet jargon. It's a day where the dieter can fall off the wagon and eat whatever they want.
YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING FOR A WHILE, HUH?
HM~? HEE HEE.
TODAAAY ...
WAS OMITSU'S BIRTHDAY.
ARE YOU SURE YOU SHOULD BE DRINKING WITH ME, THEN?
WELL, I DID TELL HER I'D BE LATE.
BESIDES, SHE'S BUSY WITH EXAMS. I'D HATE TO DISTRACT HER.


BUT IF I HAD PUT IN JUST THE *TEENSIEST* BIT MORE EFFORT AT WORK...
I COULD'VE EASILY BOUGHT HER A CAKE FROM A LATE-NIGHT BAKERY.
I LOVE OMITSU WITH ALL OF MY HEART.
I WOULD GIVE HER THE WORLD IF I COULD. THE ONLY THING IS...


SHE HAS A FAMILY THAT SUPPORTS HER DREAMS.
FRIENDS TO SNACK WITH ON THE WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL.
SHE'S ALLOWED TO GOSSIP AND GIRL-TALK...
Banner: Butcher Shop
AND SHE HAS A BOY SHE LIKES.

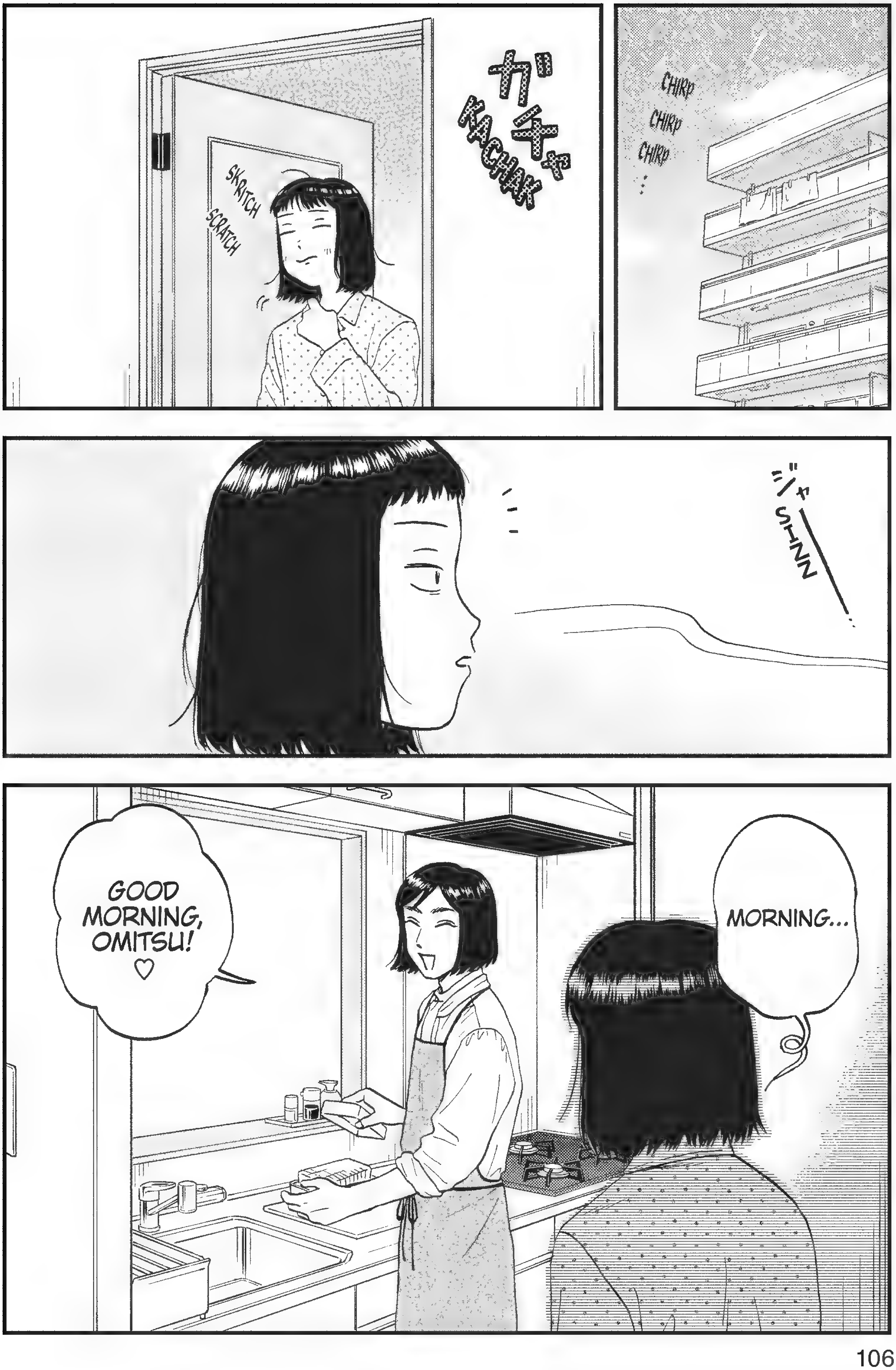

SOMETIMES, I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK SHE'S LIVING THE LIFE I ALWAYS DREAMED ABOUT.


SHE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE COMPLEXITIES OF MY ADOLESCENCE, BUT I CAN'T HELP...

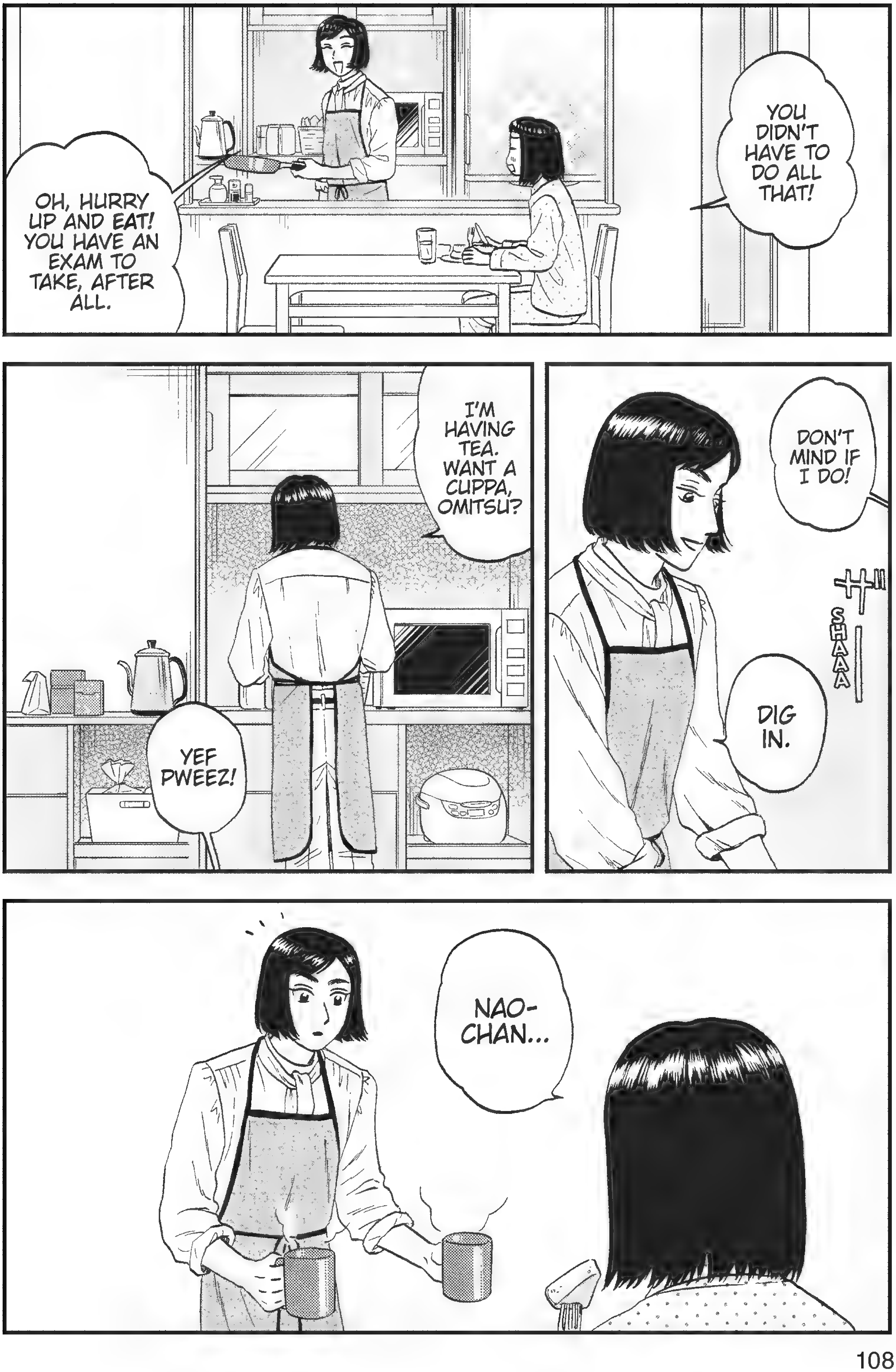

IT ISN'T NECES-SARILY BAD...
TO FEEL THAT WAY, I THINK.
IF I KNOW YOU, NAO-CHAN...
YOU'LL FINISH EATING AND RUN STRAIGHT HOME.
YOU'LL SNEAK THROUGH YOUR CONDO, QUIET AS A MOUSE...
THEN STAND OUTSIDE YOUR NIECE'S DOOR.

THEN, WHEN YOU SEE HER TOMORROW MORNING, YOU'LL FORCE A SMILE...
AND YOU'LL WHISPER IN YOUR MIND, "I'M SORRY."
AND SAY, "GOOD MORNING," AS ALWAYS.
RIGHT AFTER THAT, YOU'LL TEXT ME WITH "SORRY FOR VENTING."
AGGGHHH...
BUT YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO BE SORRY ABOUT.


IT'S ONE OF MY FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT YOU, NAO-CHAN.
WELL... THANKS.
'SCUSE ME! CAN I GET THE CHECK, PLEASE?
SURE!


CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
ガチャ
KACHAK
SKRITCH
SCRATCH
ジャ
SINN
MORNING...
GOOD MORNING, OMITSU! ♡


YOU WERE OUT LATE LAST NIGHT, NAO-CHAN. HOW COME YOU'RE--
DON'T WORRY. I GOT PLENTY OF SLEEP.
NOW, COME. TAKE A SEAT!
!
TH- THAT'S...!
THAT'S THE BIGGEST GOSH-DARN FLAPJACK I EVER SEEN!!
CONSIDER IT YOUR BIRTHDAY CAKE, SINCE I COULDN'T GET YOU ONE YESTERDAY.


YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO ALL THAT!
OH, HURRY UP AND EAT! YOU HAVE AN EXAM TO TAKE, AFTER ALL.
DON'T MIND IF I DO!
SHAAA
DIG IN.
I'M HAVING TEA. WANT A CUPPA, OMITSU?
YEF PWEEZ!
NAO-CHAN...

THIS TASTES LIKE HAPPINESS~!


I'M OFF TO SCHOOL.
AH-AH! NOT SO FAST.
TODAY WE CAN LEAVE TOGETHER.
MORNING.
MORNING, SHIMA-KUN!


TODAY...
HEE HEE!
Huh?
TODAY?
MWEHHEH...
I STARTED MY DAY WITH PANCAKES.
Oh, uh...
GOOD FOR YOU.
MY AUNT CAME HOME LATE FROM WORK YESTER-DAY...
SO SHE MADE ME PANCAKES THIS MORNING AS A BIRTHDAY CAKE.
Ohh!
THAT'S WHAT YOU MEANT!
I'M ABOUT TO SHOW THAT EXAM WHAT-FOR!
YOUR AUNT ROCKS.



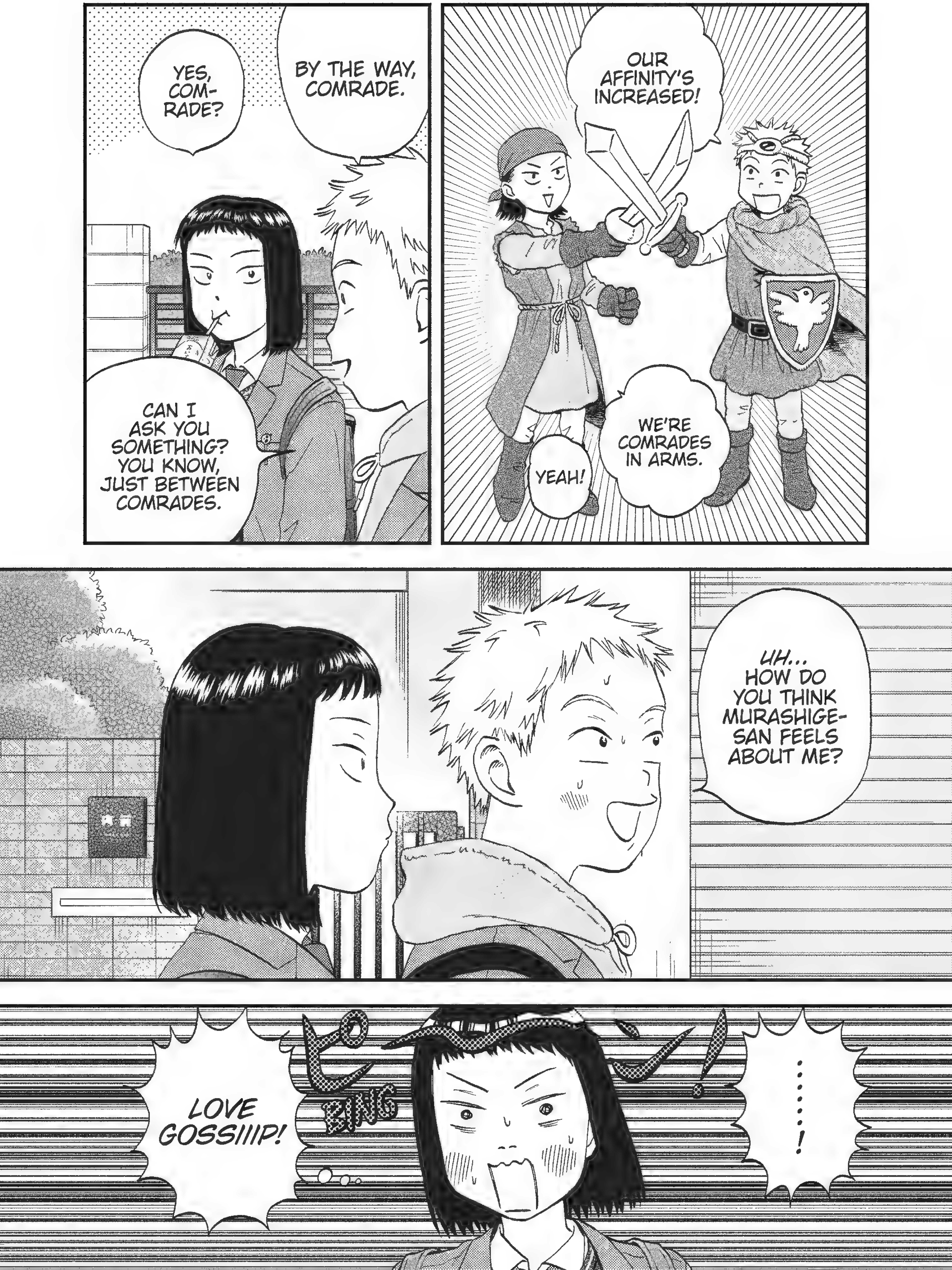
Scene 33 END

Scene 34 Ambitions in Romance


Graduation.
As we say goodbye to our third-year friends...
we prepare to transition into our second year of high school...
with spring's yearly arrival hot on our heels.


I WOKE UP EARLY TODAY.
KA-TNK
ゴトン
KA-TNK
ゴトン
SINCE THE DAYS ARE GETTING WARMER...
I HOPPED OFF THE TRAIN ONE STATION EARLY TO WALK THE REST OF THE WAY.
HEE HEE!
I'M LIVING A LIFE OF PLENTY!
Oh!
A CONVE-NIENCE STORE.
Tasty Milk
Tasty Milk
Fresh, All-Natural and Additive-Free
Flavored Milk
Flavored Milk
STRAW
GREEN
GREEN

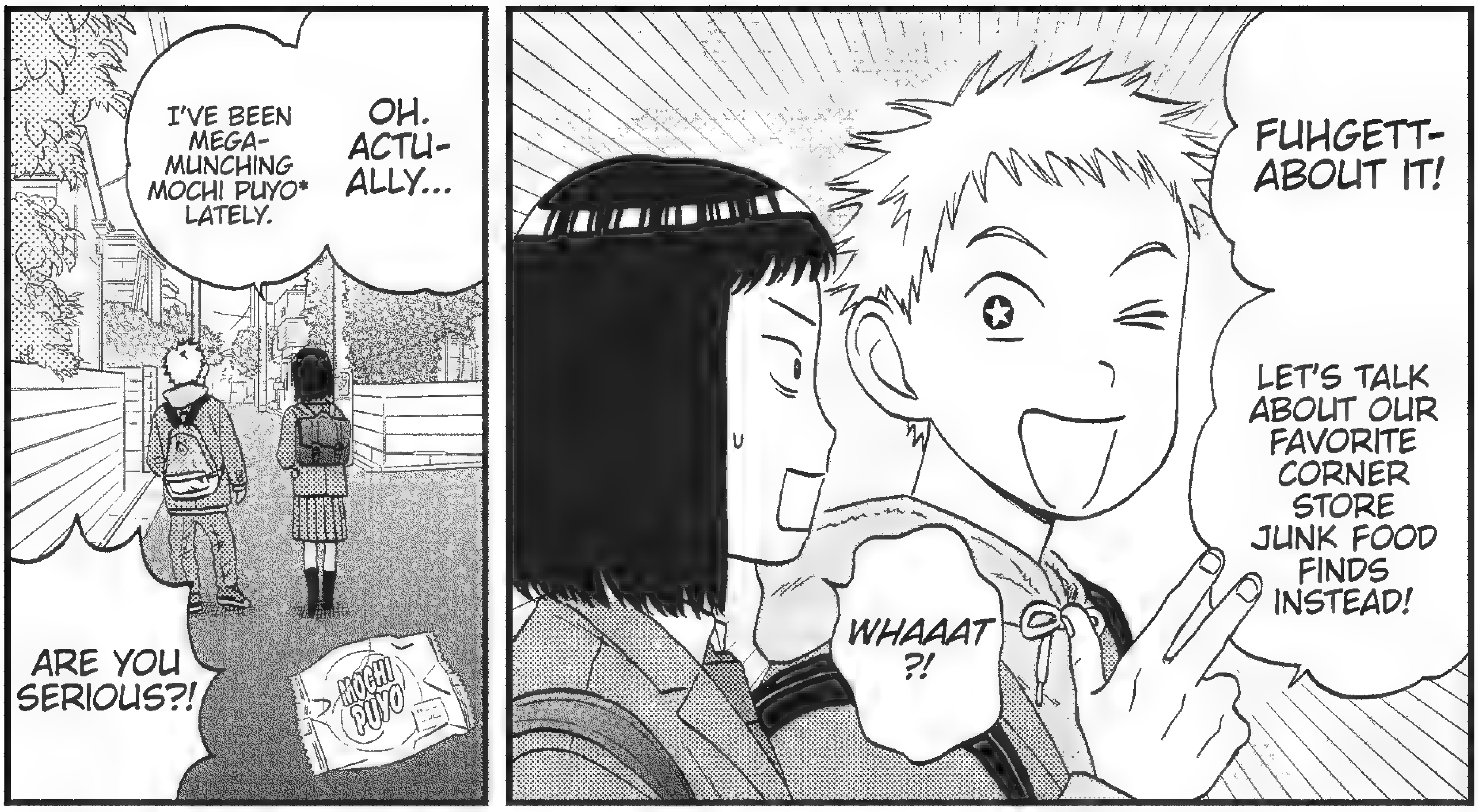

HI, YAMADA-KUN.
OH, HEY!
SO, YOU'RE A MORNING MILK-DRINKER TOO, IWAKURA-SAN?
YUP.
In fact...
I'M TRYING TO GROW PAST 160 CENTIMETERS.
YOOO! I HEAR YA!
I'M SHOOTING FOR AT LEAST 170!
I HEAR YOU GROW FASTER IF YOU DRINK MILK AND EXERCISE RIGHT AFTER.
IS THAT RIGHT?!
YUP. THAT'S WHY I SOMETIMES WALK TO SCHOOL FROM A FARTHER-AWAY STORE.
I SEE.
Tasty


BY THE WAY, COMRADE.
YES, COM-RADE?
CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING? YOU KNOW, JUST BETWEEN COMRADES.
OUR AFFINITY'S INCREASED!
WE'RE COMRADES IN ARMS.
YEAH!
UH... HOW DO YOU THINK MURASHIGE-SAN FEELS ABOUT ME?
LOVE GOSSIIIP!
ZING
......!

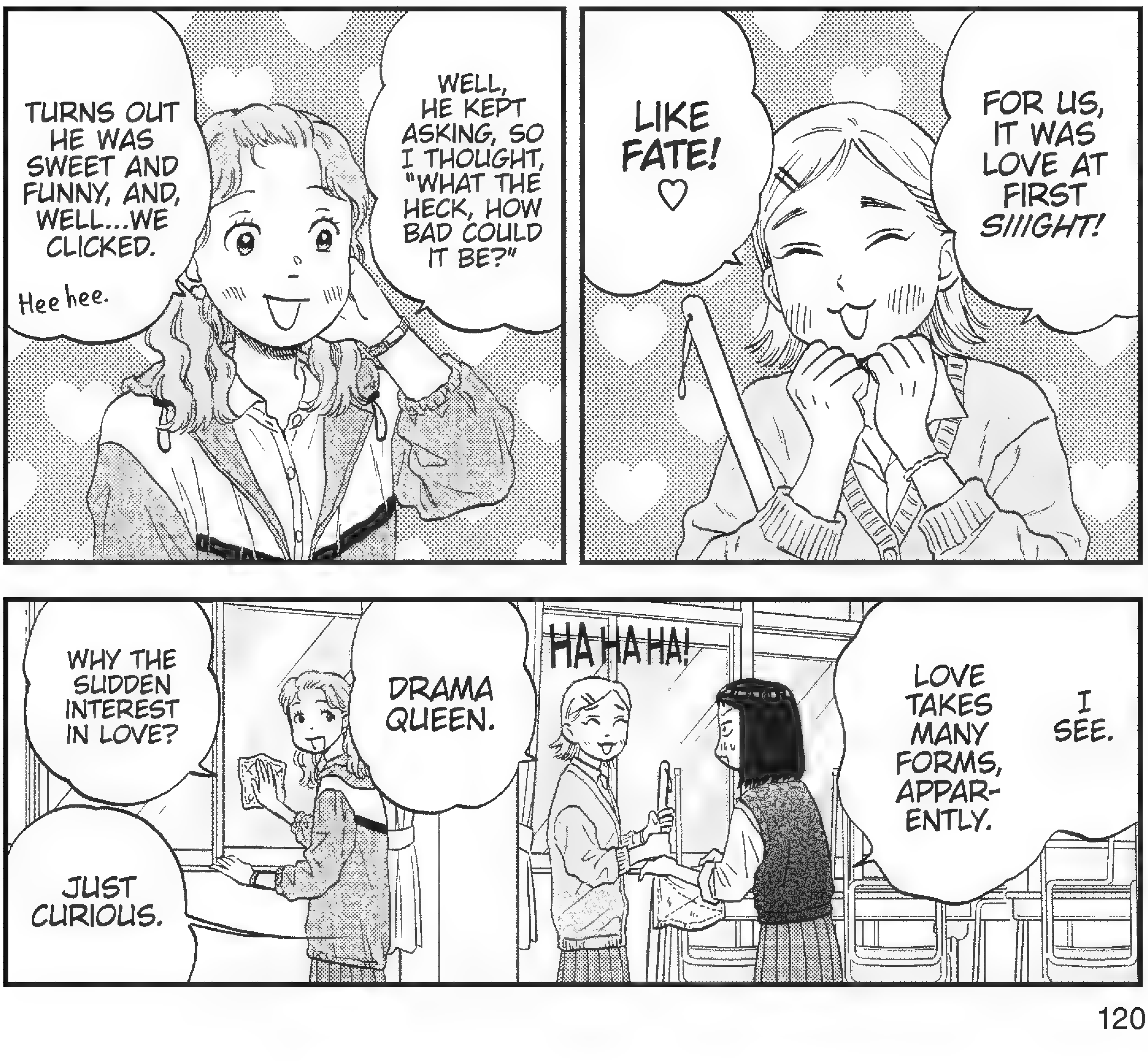

"ANYWAY, YAMADA'S JUST DESPERATE FOR A GIRLFRIEND."
UH... UHH...
"HE'S NICE, BUT I'M NOT, LIKE, INTO HIM."
SHE DID SAY YOU WERE NICE...
SHE DID?!
HRRM...
TELL ME FOR FUTURE REFERENCE, I'M BEGGING YOU!
JUST WHAT ABOUT ME ISN'T BOYFRIEND MATERIAL?!
IT'S NOT THAT YOU AREN'T BOYFRIEND MATERIAL.
......
Yeah, yeah. I get it.
JUST NICE.
ACK!
I DON'T THINK THAT'S QUITE WHAT SHE MEANT, BUT--



YOU JUST SEEM LIKE THE TYPE WHO'D GO OUT WITH ANY GIRL WHO ASKED, AND NOT JUST YUZU-CHAN.
No lie detected.
B-BUT IN MY DEFENSE, SHE'S THE *IDEAL*, YOU KNOW?!
Oh!
LIKE AN IDOL, YOU MEAN?
NOT REALLY SOMEONE YOU WANT TO DATE?
HECK NO. I'D DATE HER IN A HEART-BEAT.
THEN... I'M NOT SURE I UNDER-STAND.
?
YOU WANT TO DATE YUZU-CHAN...BUT YOU'D DATE SOMEONE ELSE?
IT WOULD BE ***AWESOME*** TO DATE MURASHIGE-SAN, BUT NOT REALISTIC, YOU KNOW?
SO, IF SOME OTHER GIRL SAID SHE LIKED ME, I'D BE PLENTY HAPPY DATING *HER*!
YOU'D SETTLE FOR SECOND BEST...?
IF IT WERE ME, I'D WANT TO BE REJECTED.
Second best?!
NO, WAIT! THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!
Perspectives on romance.
ゴ" GWO
ゴ" GWO
ゴ" GWO
ゴ" GWO
......



*This is a reference to mochiponyo, a Japanese pastry filled with custard cream.




"I JUST WANT A GIRL-FRIEND. I DON'T EVEN CARE WHO SHE IS."
But apparently, some folks see asking someone out as the starting point for a real relationship.
I was honestly a little disgusted at Yamada-kun's confession that he'd date just about anyone.
※She wasn't wrong, though.
Perhaps I was too quick to judge.
PHEW. CLOSE ONE, THERE.
I THOUGHT I PUT IT PRETTY DELICATELY, BUT SHE STILL SCRUNCHED HER NOSE UP AT ME.
Wait. Girls drool over all kinds of **guys**, don't they?
Isn't that the whole point of attraction?
Pretty.
Peppy.
Cute.
Sweet.
If you set your heart on one person...
wouldn't it be traumatic if they rejected you?
Aren't you supposed to find someone you vibe with, then start dating to see whether love will bloom??

GROSS!
SPLAT
OOPS!
KNOCK IT OFF! THAT'S SOOO NASTY!
SORRY.
DID IT HIT YOU?
NO. LUCKY FOR YOU.
IT'S OKAY. WE HAVEN'T USED IT YET.
Oh yeah?
YOU SHOULD BE USING IT.
THE SOONER WE GET TO WORK, THE SOONER WE'LL BE DONE.
Ha ha ha! Seri-ously?!
HEY, CAN I SEE THAT?
ATTACK!
OW!
WHAT THE HECK, YAMADA?

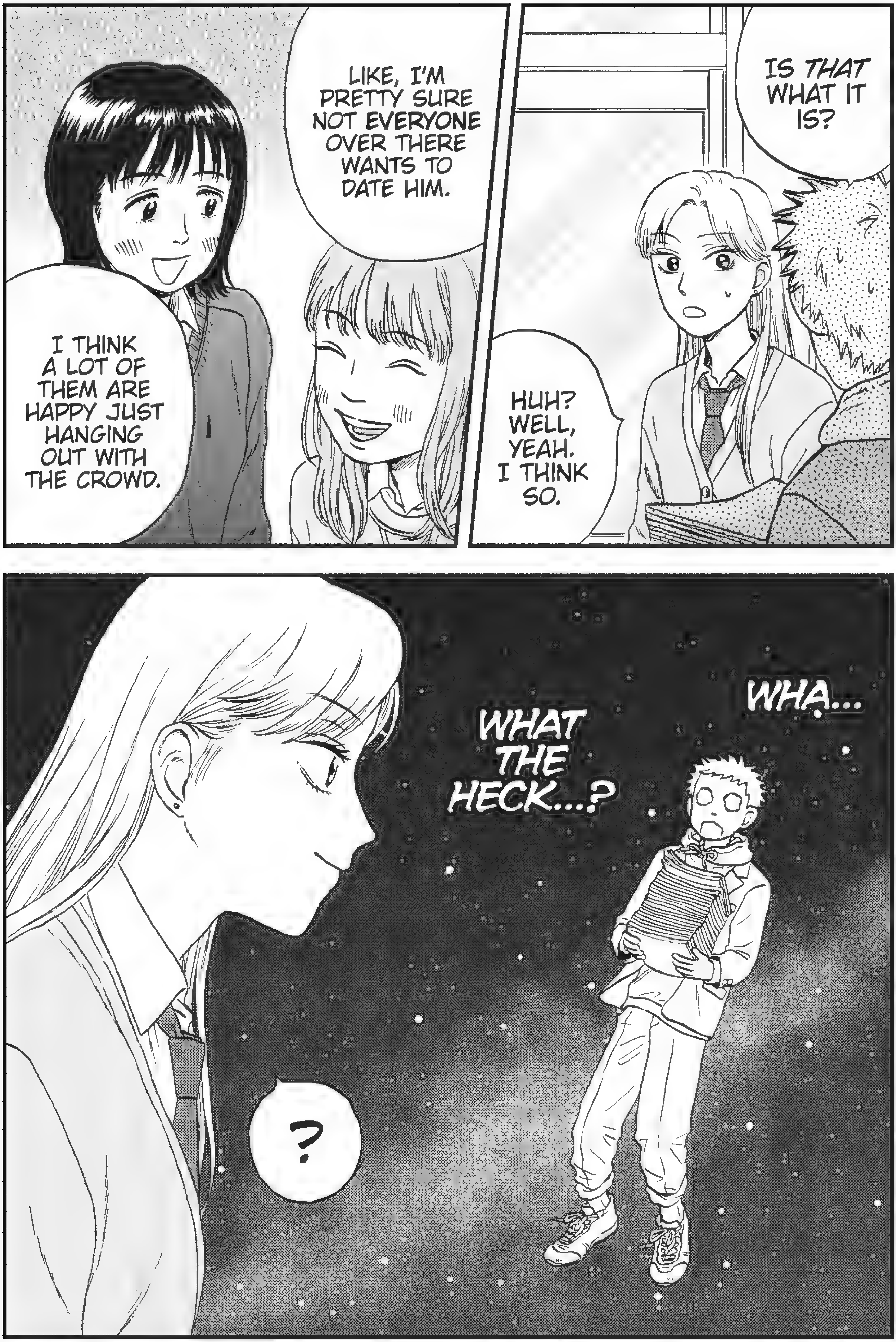

I CHALLENGE YOU GUYS TO A MOPPING BATTLE.
YOU'RE ON!
READY...
TROMP
GO!
TROMP
GOOOAL!
DARN! I TRIPPED!
WE'RE NOT DONE YET!
BEST OUTTA THREE!
YOU GUYS ARE SUCH A BUNCH OF KIDS.
AH HA HA!
Jeez!
YOU KNOW IT!

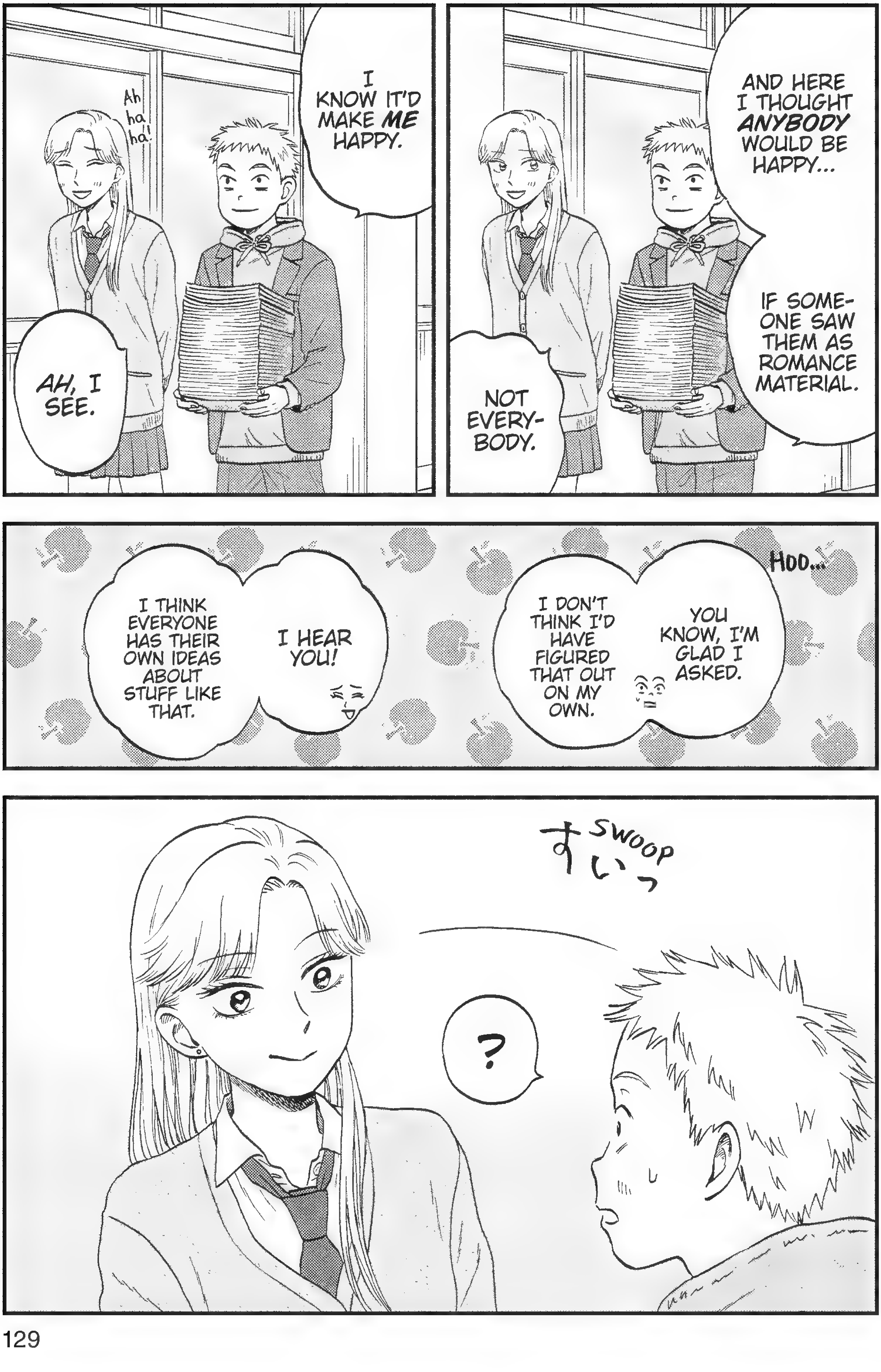

Both have girlfriends.
Nooo!
Are girls only interested in tall, stylish guys after all?!
Am I doomed to forever be the lovable rascal?! The adorable mood-setter and nothing more?!

WOW-EE!
The guy who's only interested in beautiful, stylish girls.
IT'S MURASHIGE-SAN!
Here we go.
WHATCHA GOT THERE, MURASHIGE-SAN?
HEY, YAMADA.
JUST OUR OLD MATH HOMEWORK PROBLEMS.
I CAN CARRY THOSE FOR YOU!
Huh?
OH, NO. THAT'S OKAY. THEY AREN'T HEAVY.
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING THEM? THE CLASS-ROOM?
THANKS, BUT--
IT'S ALL RIGHT! I WANT TO HELP.
WELL... THANKS, THEN.


Mweh heh!
THERE'S SOU-SUKE.
National Test
Sheesh!
SURROUNDED BY GIRLS FROM OTHER CLASSES AS USUAL!
HE'S SUCH A FRICKIN' ROMEO-SUKE!
MAKES YOU KINDA ROLL YOUR EYES, HUH?
Ah ha!
Oof.
A LITTLE BIT.

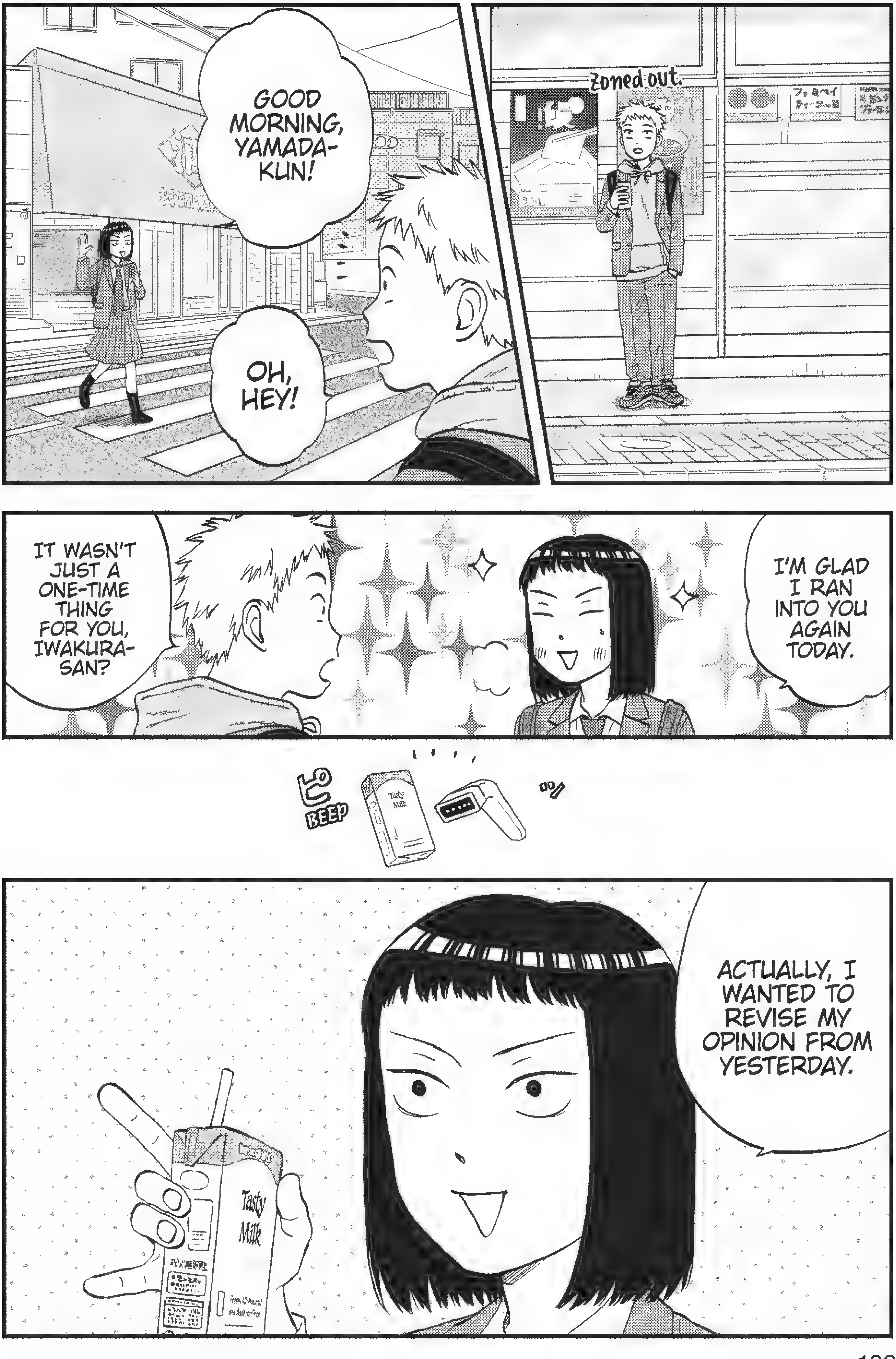

I CAN'T SAY I BLAME THEM, THOUGH.
Huh?
WITH SHIMA-KUN, YOU NEVER HAVE TO WONDER IF HE'S TREATING YOU AS A POTENTIAL GIRLFRIEND OR JUST A CLASS-MATE.
HE TALKS TO EVERYONE THE SAME WAY.
LIKE A... WALKING SAFE SPACE, I GUESS.

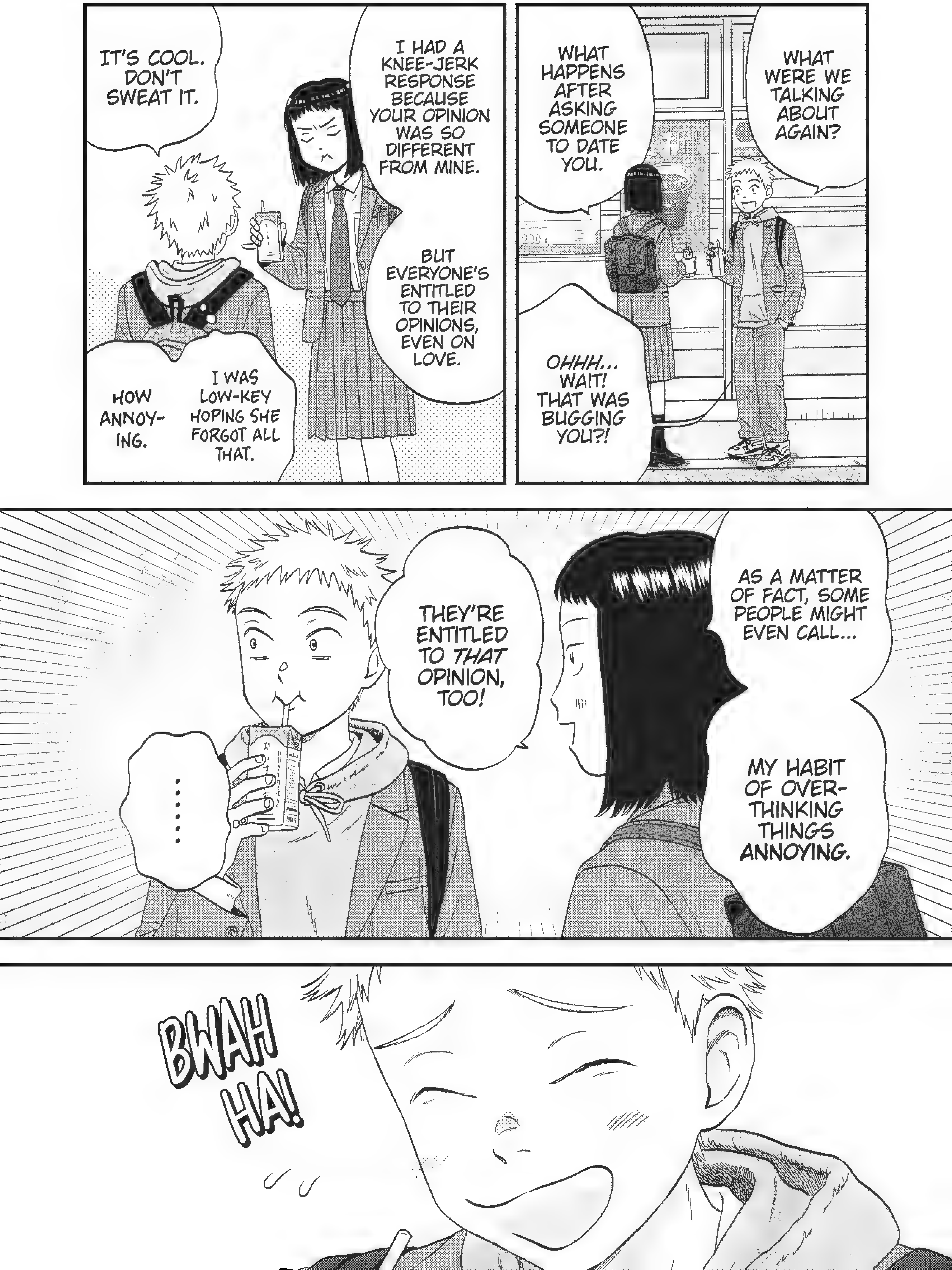

LIKE, I'M PRETTY SURE NOT EVERYONE OVER THERE WANTS TO DATE HIM.
I THINK A LOT OF THEM ARE HAPPY JUST HANGING OUT WITH THE CROWD.
IS *THAT* WHAT IT IS?
HUH? WELL, YEAH. I THINK SO.
WHA...
WHAT THE HECK...?
?


I KNOW IT'D MAKE ME HAPPY.
Ah ha ha!
AH, I SEE.
AND HERE I THOUGHT ANYBODY WOULD BE HAPPY...
IF SOMEONE SAW THEM AS ROMANCE MATERIAL.
NOT EVERYBODY.
HOO...
YOU KNOW, I'M GLAD I ASKED.
I DON'T THINK I'D HAVE FIGURED THAT OUT ON MY OWN.
I HEAR YOU!
I THINK EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN IDEAS ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT.
SWOOP
?


ACTUALLY, LET ME TAKE HALF OF THAT BACK.
HUH?
I'M THE KIND OF GIRL WHO PREFERS TO CARRY HER OWN WEIGHT.
THANKS FOR TAKING HALF, THOUGH.

EmilyMart
BEEP
Tasty Milk
Fresh, All-Natural and Additive-Free


Zoned out.
GOOD MORNING, YAMADA-KUN!
OH, HEY!
I'M GLAD I RAN INTO YOU AGAIN TODAY.
IT WASN'T JUST A ONE-TIME THING FOR YOU, IWAKURA-SAN?
ピ BEEP
Tasty Milk
ACTUALLY, I WANTED TO REVISE MY OPINION FROM YESTERDAY.
Tasty Milk


I HAD A KNEE-JERK RESPONSE BECAUSE YOUR OPINION WAS SO DIFFERENT FROM MINE.
BUT EVERYONE'S ENTITLED TO THEIR OPINIONS, EVEN ON LOVE.
IT'S COOL. DON'T SWEAT IT.
I WAS LOW-KEY HOPING SHE FORGOT ALL THAT.
HOW ANNOY-ING.
WHAT WERE WE TALKING ABOUT AGAIN?
WHAT HAPPENS AFTER ASKING SOMEONE TO DATE YOU.
OHHH... WAIT! THAT WAS BUGGING YOU?!
AS A MATTER OF FACT, SOME PEOPLE MIGHT EVEN CALL...
MY HABIT OF OVER-THINKING THINGS ANNOYING.
THEY'RE ENTITLED TO *THAT* OPINION, TOO!
......
BWAH HA!

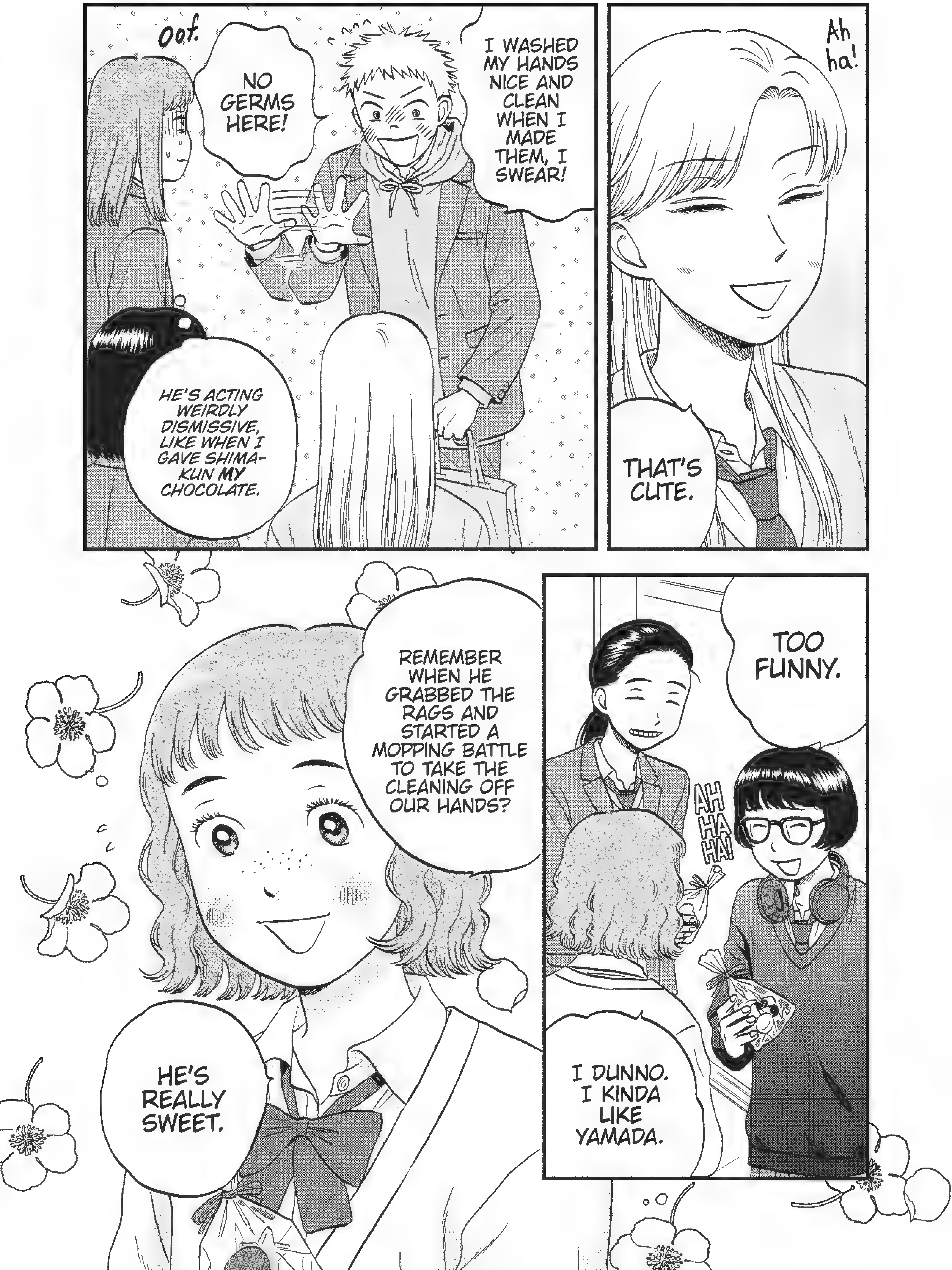

Y'KNOW, IF WE ADDED BOTH OF OURS TOGETHER THEN SPLIT 'EM IN HALF, WE'D BE PERFECT.
OUR WHAT?
OUR SERIOUSNESS LEVELS!
HEY!
GOOD MORNING, SHIMA-KUN.
DID YOU RIDE THE SAME TRAIN TODAY?
WE MET UP A STATION EARLIER AND WALKED HERE TOGETHER.
Yup!
TWO DAYS IN A ROW!


YOU GUUUYS! LET ME IN ON THE FUN NEXT TIME!
Ooh!
YOU'D NEVER WAKE UP IN TIME, MY DUDE.
I'D LIKE TO TRY.
You sure?
I still don't really "get" girls.
But they say you're popular twice in your life. I'll hang on to that for now.


Until then, I've just gotta stay true to myself.
AND KEEP POURING MY HEART AND SOUL...
INTO EVERY-THING I DO!


March 14
HAPPY WHITE DAY!
HERE'S MY WAY OF SAYING THANKS...
FOR THE CHOCOLATE LAST MONTH!
HEY! IS THIS...
HOME-MADE?!

ぎゃーーー AAACK!
YOU'RE KIDDING! I ONLY GAVE HIM STORE-BOUGHT CHOCOLATE!
I FEEL SO BAD!
DON'T SWEAT IT.
IT'S A SIGN OF MY HEARTFELT APPRECIATION.
HERE YOU GO!
THANK YOU.
YOU SURE? WE DIDN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING.
I MADE ENOUGH FOR EVERYBODY.
BUT I SLIPPED IN A HEART-SHAPED COOKIE FOR WHOEVER GAVE ME SOMETHING.
Oh! There it is!


Oof.
NO GERMS HERE!
I WASHED MY HANDS NICE AND CLEAN WHEN I MADE THEM, I SWEAR!
HE'S ACTING WEIRDLY DISMISSIVE, LIKE WHEN I GAVE SHIMA-KUN MY CHOCOLATE.
Ah ha!
THAT'S CUTE.
TOO FUNNY.
AH HA HA!
I DUNNO. I KINDA LIKE YAMADA.
REMEMBER WHEN HE GRABBED THE RAGS AND STARTED A MOPPING BATTLE TO TAKE THE CLEANING OFF OUR HANDS?
HE'S REALLY SWEET.


?
YOU WHAAAT?!
I'M NOT MAKIN' YOU ANYTHING!
ぼり CRUNCH
CRUNCH ぼり
MAKE MINE MATCHA-FLAVORED NEXT TIME.
WE'LL HAVE TO SAY GOODBYE TO THESE HAPPY DAYS SOON, WON'T WE?
Waaah!
DON'T TALK LIKE THAT!
OH!
I HEARD WE CAN RUN OUR THIRD-YEAR SCHOOL FESTIVAL STANDS WITH CLASSMATES FROM OUR FIRST AND SECOND YEARS, AND...

Scene 34 END

Scene ㉟ Tippity-Tapping into a New School Year




OKAY! LET'S TAKE A BREATHER.
GOOD WORK.
SO, HMM...
OKAAAY... YEAH.



LET'S DO A DIFFERENT PLAY!
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA! ARE YOU SERIOUS?!
WE CAN'T DO THAT! THE FIRST-YEAR WELCOMING PERFOR-MANCE IS IN A MONTH!
SURE WE CAN! *IF* WE PUT ON A SHOW WE'VE DONE BEFORE.
THAT'S JUST AS HARD.
WHAT'S YOUR DEAL HERE?!
WEEELL...
I'M SORRY.
LET ME JUST... RETHINK THIS A BIT.


It's this script. It isn't any good.
So we might as well swap it out for a crowd favorite.
Why do you want to change the play, senpai?
I knew this would happen before I even put pen to paper.
But... I got greedy.
After all...I'm a third-year. My curtain falls in April.


THE SPOTLIGHT SHOULD BELONG TO EVERYONE, NOT JUST ME, BUT IT'S HARD TO SEPARATE THE TWO.
......
SO, EVEN *YOU* THINK THAT WAY, KANECHIKA-SENPAI.
OF COURSE!
HMPH!
REMINDS ME OF WHAT YOU TOLD ME WHEN WE FIRST MET, SHIMA-KUN.
AND WHAT WAS THAT?
REMEMBER? YOU DIDN'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOUR PAST AS A CHILD ACTOR.
YOU SAID, "IF YOU CAN'T PICK UP ON THAT, YOU'LL NEVER PRODUCE ANYTHING WORTH-WHILE."
FIRST OF ALL, I DID *NOT* TAKE IT THAT FAR!

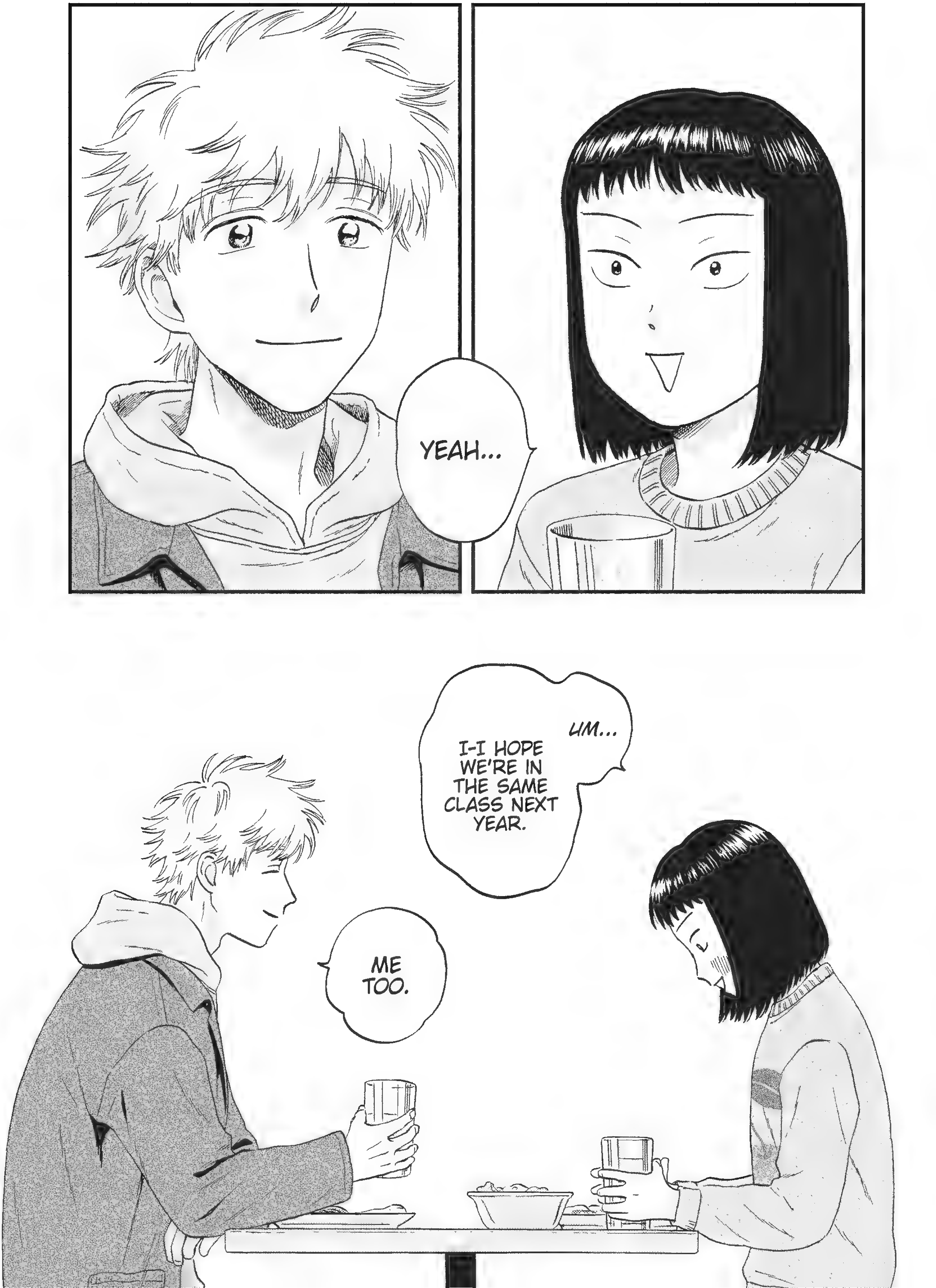

THE STORY YOU CAME UP WITH FOR THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL WAS GREAT.
I KNOW!
THAT'S WHY I PROPOSE USING THAT FOR THE FIRST-YEAR WELCOMING SHOW!
......
IGNORE ME IF I'M MISSING THE MARK WITH THIS.
BUT I THINK, AS LONG AS YOU'RE CREATING THINGS...
YOU'LL CONSTANTLY BE COMPARING YOUR NEXT PROJECT TO EVERYTHING THAT'S COME BEFORE.
EVEN OTHER PEOPLE WILL PROBABLY SAY THEY LIKED YOUR OLD WORK BETTER.


AND SINCE YOU'VE BEEN CREATING THINGS SINCE PRESCHOOL, YOU'D BE THE EXPERT.
Nah.
YOU CAN'T COMPARE ACTING TO SCRIPT-WRITING.
BESIDES, WASN'T I A CRAPPY ACTOR WHEN I FIRST JOINED THE CLUB?
LOOK, IF YOU'RE HITTING A WALL, LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE SCRIPT.
I'M SURE WE CAN WORK THROUGH IT AS A GROUP.
BUT IF YOU LET YOURSELF GET SWEPT UP IN THOSE COMPARISONS...
YOU'LL PROBABLY DROWN.


AND, SENPAI? YOU'RE ALLOWED TO BE A LITTLE GREEDY.
SHIMA-KUN! COULD YOU BE...
AN HONEST-TO-GOODNESS, KIND-OF SORT-OF NICE GUY?!
DID YOU THINK I WASN'T...?

AHEM! IT'S SPRING BREAK, EVERYONE.
THIS MAY BE THE LAST TIME WE GATHER AS CLASS 1-3.
HOWEVER, EVEN AS SECOND-YEARS IN DIFFERENT CLASSES, WE'LL ALL BE JOINED BY THE SAME HALLWAY!
AH HA HA!
LET'S SAY HELLO AS WE PASS EACH OTHER...
AND LEND EACH OTHER TEXTBOOKS IF WE FORGET.
GET THOSE GLASSES UP!
CHEERS!
カンパーイ!


CHATTER
ワイ
CHATTER
ワイ
ワイ
CHATTER
GOOD WORK THERE, CLASS REP.
SAME TO YOU!
KLINK
YOU'VE BEEN RIGHT THERE WITH ME FROM THE ENTRANCE CEREMONY TO THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL.
THANK YOU.
NO, NO. THANK *YOU*.
WE SURE WENT THROUGH A LOT, HUH?


YEAH...
UM...
I-I HOPE WE'RE IN THE SAME CLASS NEXT YEAR.
ME TOO.

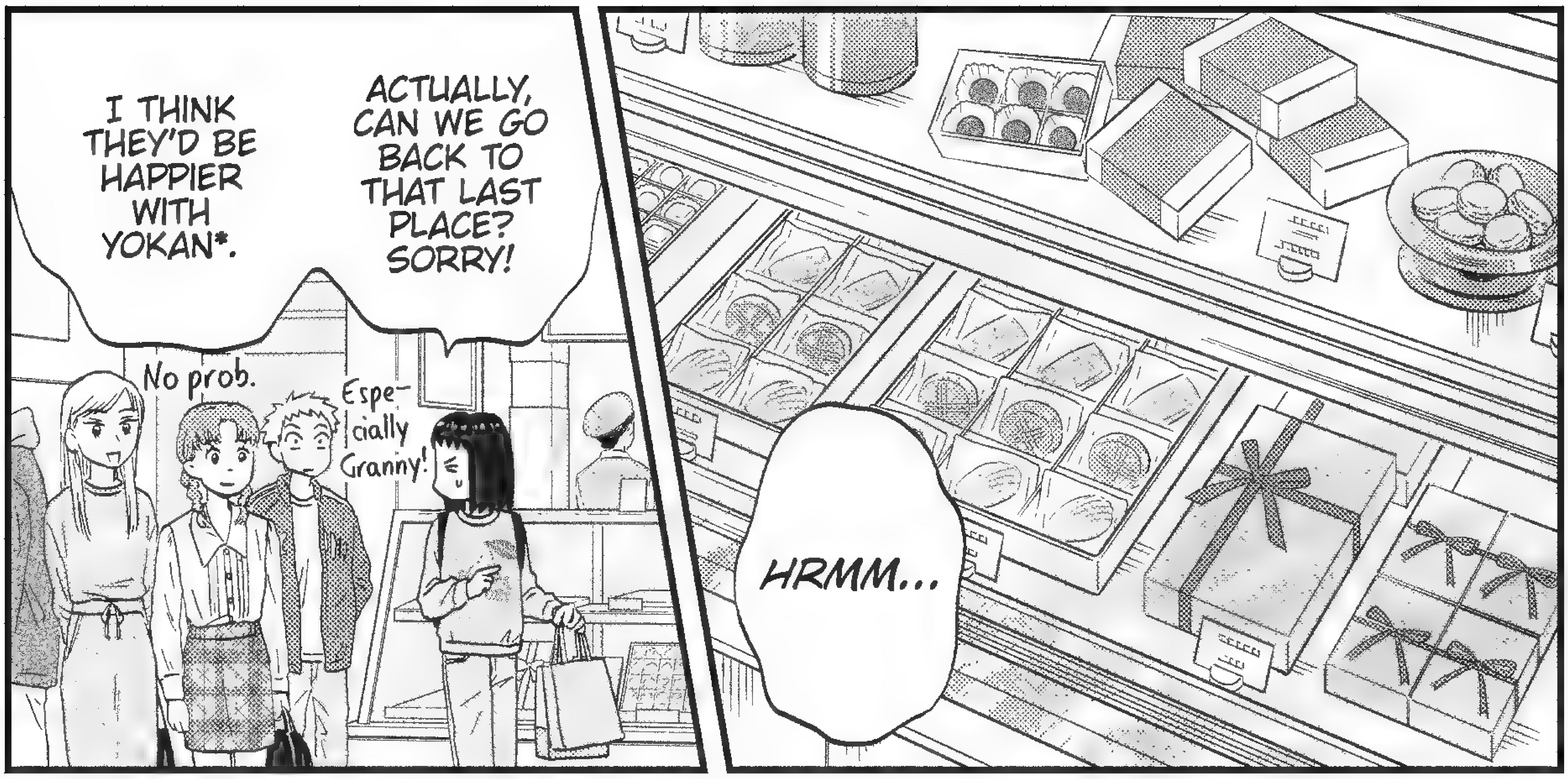

WHAT'LL I DO IF I DON'T MAKE ANY FRIENDS?
EAT LUNCH WITH ME IF I CRASH AND BURN, OKAY?
YOU KNOW IT.
YOU'LL BE FINE.
Getting their money's worth out of the all-you-can-eat buffet.
YUM.
YUMMY.
ONE HOUR LATER...
I'M SWEAR-ING OFF PIZZA FOR A YEAR.
THE AFTER-PARTY WILL BE AT THE KARAOKE PARLOR!
DING
DA-DING
WHA? YOU'RE SKIPPING OUT AGAIN, MITSUMI?
JABBER
JABBER
Yep.
I'M FLYING HOME TO IKAJIMA TOMORROW.
BUT FIRST, I NEED TO PICK OUT SOME SOUVENIRS FOR THE FAMILY.


I'LL HELP YOU PICK OUT SOME STUFF.
HOW LONG COULD IT TAKE? AN HOUR?
ARE YOU SUUURE?
OH... WELL, ALL RIGHT.
SAFE TRAVELS.
THANKS.
......
IF YOU DON'T MIND AN EXTRA SET OF HANDS, I'LL COME TOO!
きゃっ SQUEE! きゃ SQUEE!
Ate way too much.
Ooh!
WHAT'S SHAKIN'?
WE WERE JUST ABOUT TO TAKE A WALK TO SETTLE OUR STOMACHS!
Ulp!
RIGHT, GUYS?!
IN THE END, IT'S THE USUAL GANG.
Ha ha ha!
SEEMS LIKE IT.





SHE'LL BE A SECOND-YEAR IN JUNIOR HIGH!
THINK MY SISTER WOULD LIKE IT?
MAYBE SHE'D PREFER SOMETHING MORE MATURE...?
Hmm...
HOW OLD IS SHE?
Ooh!
THIS IS CUTE!
EVEN I'VE NEVER BOUGHT SOMETHING TO MATCH MY CURRENT ENSEMBLE!
OH!
WHAT ABOUT A CLASSIC PIECE THAT'LL FIT WITH HER CURRENT ENSEM-BLE?
OR SOMETHING IN THE LATEST STYLE?
UH... OKAY.
※Seats for dads who tag along on shopping trips.
AWW! THAT'S SO CUTE! ♡
Mercy!
Yeah! Eat that!
THESE ARE THE KINDS OF CLOTHES MY SISTER ALWAYS WEARS.
YOUR KID BROTHER'S A FIFTH-GRADER, RIGHT?
TRUTH.
EACH SCHOOL HAS ITS OWN CRAZE, HUH?
YEP. WHAT WOULD HE LIKE?



*Yokan is a Japanese jelly sweet generally made with adzuki beans.




BE SAFE!
SURE WILL!
TELL YOUR FAMILY...
YOU MADE A BUNCH OF GOOD FRIENDS, OKAY?
AH HA HA!
SURE WILL!

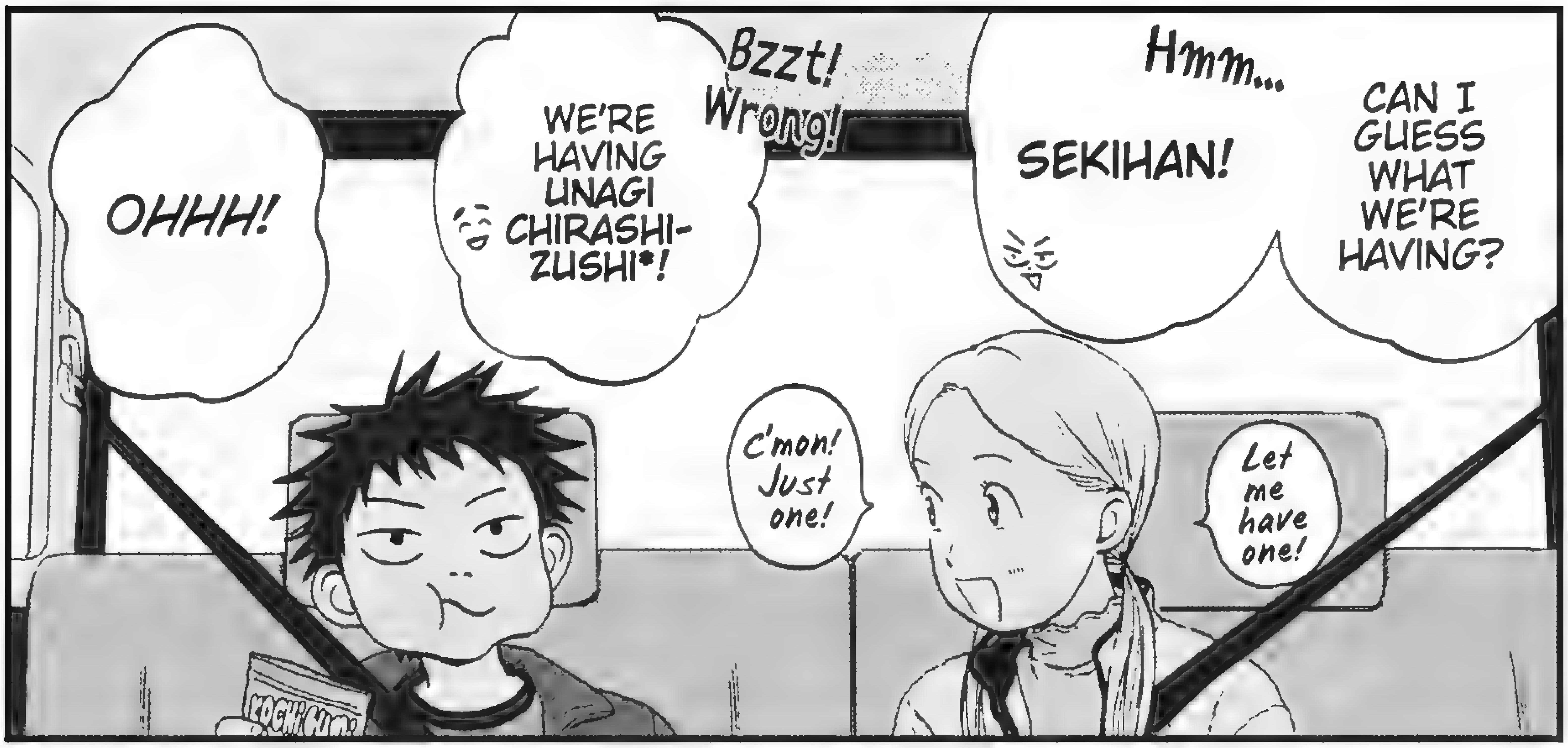

I'LL TELL THEM TOKYO'S MY SECOND HOME, TOO!



YO, LOOK! SHE'S STILL WAVING!
AH HA HA HA!
HUH?
SHE LOOKS LIKE A TOURIST WITH ALL OF THOSE BAGS.
HEE HEE.

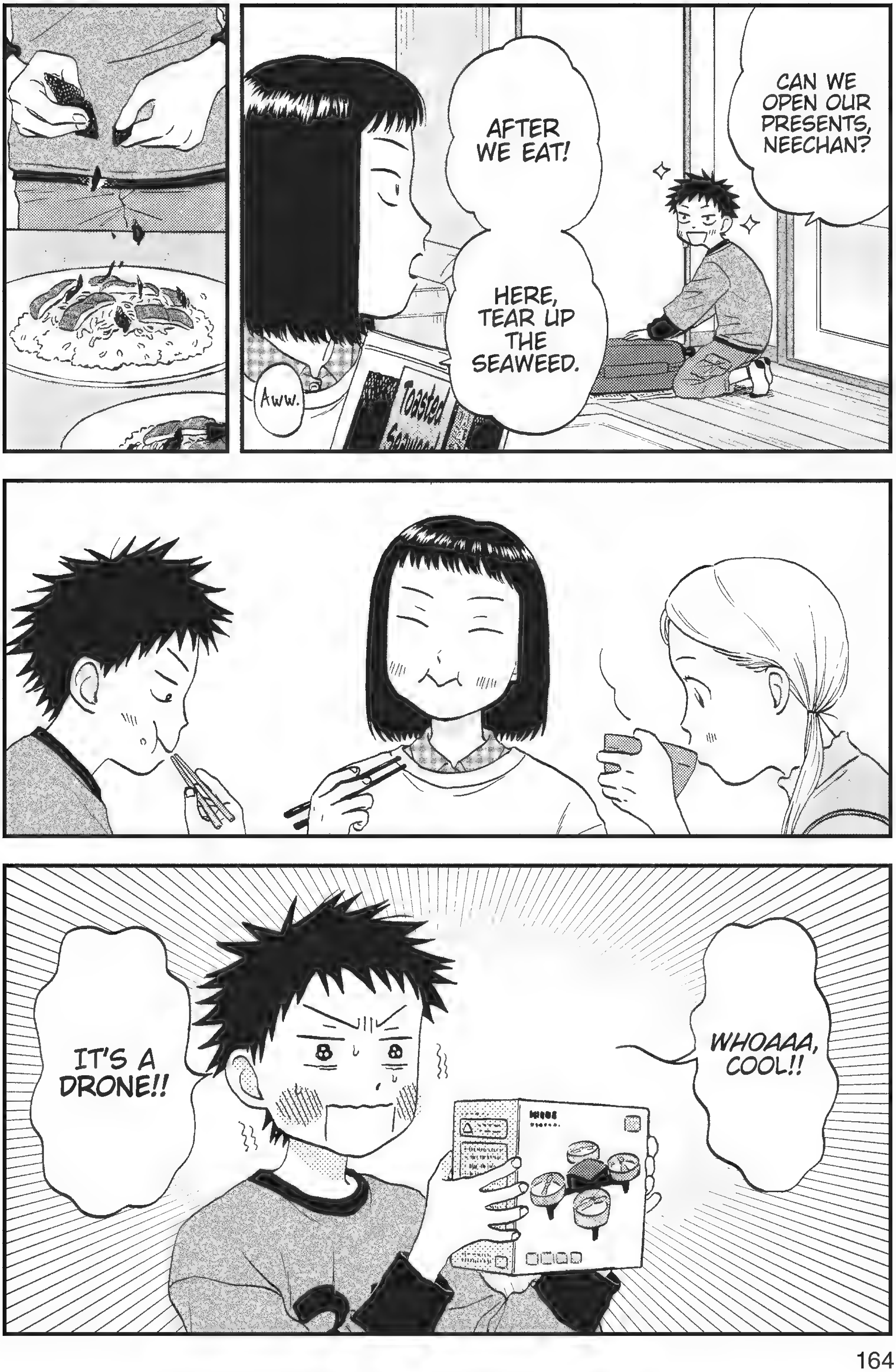

HEEEY! EYES FORWARD!
NOTO AIRPORT

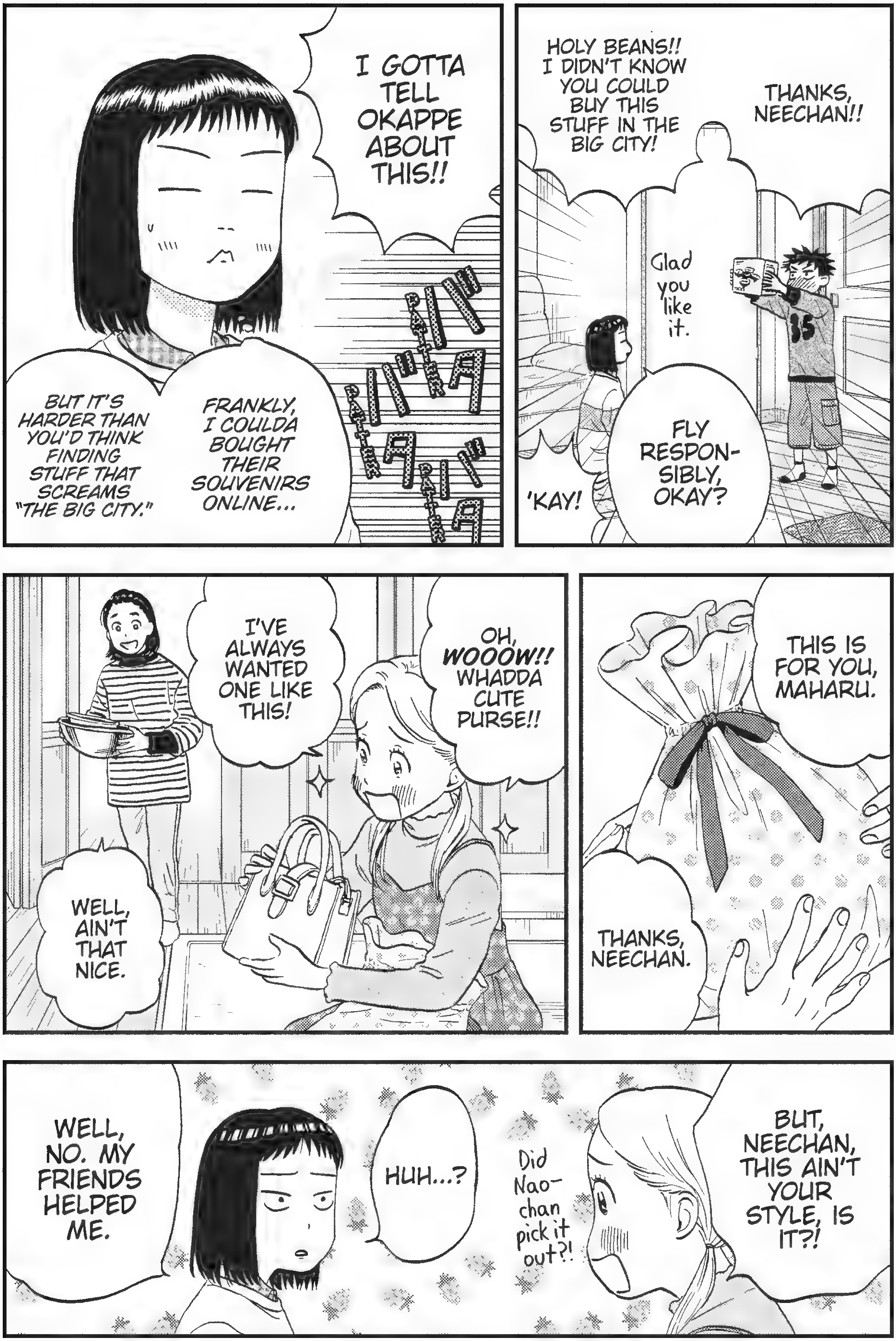

NEE-CHAAAN!
SPRING'S ABOUT TO SPRING OVER HERE TOO, HUH?
WOULDN'T KNOW IT FROM THE CHILL IN THE AIR.
WHERE'S DAD AND GRANNY?
DAD'S AT WORK, AS USUAL.
AND GRANNY'S GETTING DINNER READY AT HOME.
It is a workday, after all.



*Like a deconstructed sushi roll. The main components are a bowl of rice with sushi seasoning and eel on top.




AFTER WE EAT!
CAN WE OPEN OUR PRESENTS, NEECHAN?
HERE, TEAR UP THE SEAWEED.
Aww.
Toasted Seaweed
IT'S A DRONE!!
WHOAAA, COOL!!


HOLY BEANS!! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD BUY THIS STUFF IN THE BIG CITY!
THANKS, NEECHAN!!
Glad you like it.
FLY RESPON-SIBLY, OKAY?
'KAY!
I GOTTA TELL OKAPPE ABOUT THIS!!
FRANKLY, I COULDA BOUGHT THEIR SOUVENIRS ONLINE...
BUT IT'S HARDER THAN YOU'D THINK FINDING STUFF THAT SCREAMS "THE BIG CITY."
THIS IS FOR YOU, MAHARU.
THANKS, NEECHAN.
OH, WOOOW!! WHADDA CUTE PURSE!!
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED ONE LIKE THIS!
WELL, AIN'T THAT NICE.
BUT, NEECHAN, THIS AIN'T YOUR STYLE, IS IT?!
Did Nao-chan pick it out?!
HUH...?
WELL, NO. MY FRIENDS HELPED ME.



WAS IT THAT GIRL YOU SENT ME A PICTURE OF THE OTHER DAY?
YEAH, HER!
WOW...
YOU'VE GOT SOME STYLISH FRIENDS, NEECHAN.
UH, MAHARU ...?
YOUR NEECHAN FEELS LIKE YOU'RE DISSING HER.
That's not very kind.
HERE'S ANOTHER PIC FROM YESTERDAY.
WELL, LET'S SEE IT!
OH, SO SHE'S THE ONE WHO PICKED IT OUT!
WOW. THEY'RE ALL WEARING SUCH CUTE CLOTHES.
OH! THIS GUY'S CUTE!
DWEH HEH...YA THINK?
NOW, WHY ARE YOU BLUSHING?



Once spring break's over, I'll be a second-year.
THERE'S A FUNNY STORY BEHIND THIS ONE. SEE, WE WERE...
I don't know what class I'll be in.
I can only hope I get along with my new kouhai.
But I'm not nearly as scared as I was going into my first year.


After all, Tokyo's my home away from home now.
1st for the Earth
Scene 34 END

Bonus: Valentine's Day① Mukai-kun




Who even was she? From another class?
She never told me her name or number.
Well, she didn't ask me out or confess her feelings.
I might be about to get my first girl-friend!
BA-DMP ドキ
......
BA-DMP ドキ
BA-DMP ドキ
MOVE ON, GIRL. YOU DESERVE BETTER.
I DON'T HAVE A CHANCE, DO I?
HE DIDN'T EVEN ASK ME ANY-THING!
ANY GUY WHO RESPONDS WITH "COOL" IS SO NOT WORTH YOUR TIME.
Like, how can you be that clueless?!
He blew his chance before he even knew it.

END

Bonus: Valentine's Day② Mika-chan




WHAT IF I FLIPPED THE SCRIPT AND SAID...
HERE.
SORRY, OBUCHI-KUN.
Huh...?
B-BUT I NEVER EVEN ASKED HER OUT.
'SIDES, I WAS HALF-KIDDING, ANYWAY.
BUT IF THAT'S WHAT HE THOUGHT ABOUT IT, I'D DIE!
NOW **THAT'S** READING TOO MUCH INTO IT!
......
ぐる SPIN
ぐる SPIN
ぐる SPIN
ぐる SPIN
HERE, OBUCHI-KUN.
I MADE **WAAAY** TOO MANY, SO YOU CAN HAVE ONE!
OH!
COOL. THANKS!
Solution: Feign ignorance and play it extra safe.
MIKA, YOU COWARD!

END

Bonus: White Day




Here. For White Day.
Wow! Thanks.
HERE.
HUH?! IT'S SO CUTE!
Y-YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THAT! I ONLY HANDED OUT SWEETS FROM A VALUE BAG!
NO WORRIES. MINE CAME FROM THE SUPER-MARKET.
I JUST SAW IT AND THOUGHT OF YOU.
Thank you! It's too nice to eat. So I won't!
Actually bought it in a fancy department store.

END

Thank you for reading *Skip and Loafer* Volume 6!

Thanks to your support, Mitsumi-chan and her friends are moving on to their second year in high school! A time for changing classes and deciding career paths. As the story's creator, I'm filled with as much anxiety as they are, but as always, I plan to enjoy my time writing about these characters and their journeys, growing with them along the way.
I hope you'll enjoy Volume 7!

* Assistants *

Yamato-san
Nito-san
Yumi Kosuzu-san
Kaeki Yuu-san

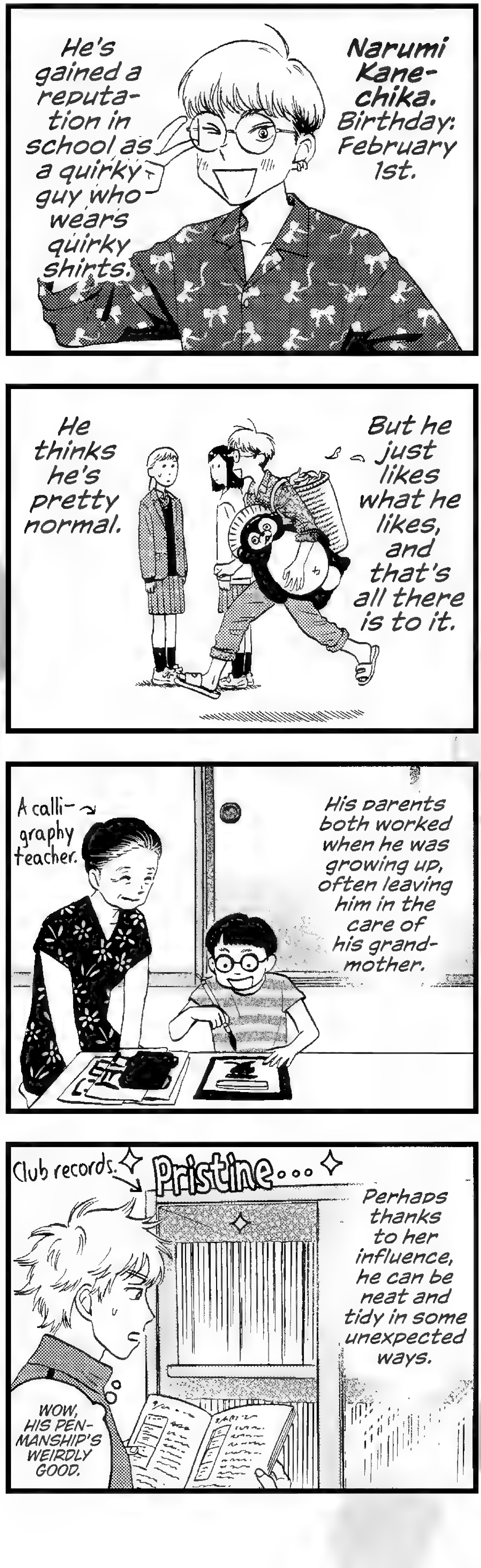
* The editorial staff * Miyazaki-san

Thank you all so much.



As always, I offer my heartfelt thanks to everyone for supporting this work.

Kanechika-kun



Homecoming


THE HECK'RE Y'ALL LAUGHING ABOUT?!
HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE!
I'M HO...
HEE!
HAW HAW HAW!
Haw!
Haw!
HA HA
AH HA
KIPPEI FARTS EVERY TIME HE LAUGHS!
'CAUSE I AIN'T ET NOTHING BUT TATERS TODAY!
CUT IT OOOUT!
PRRT!
And that was when Mitsumi finally felt like she'd come home.
AHHH... LOW-BROW COMEDY!

Skip and Loafer





Skip and Loafer

SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

Skip and Loafer

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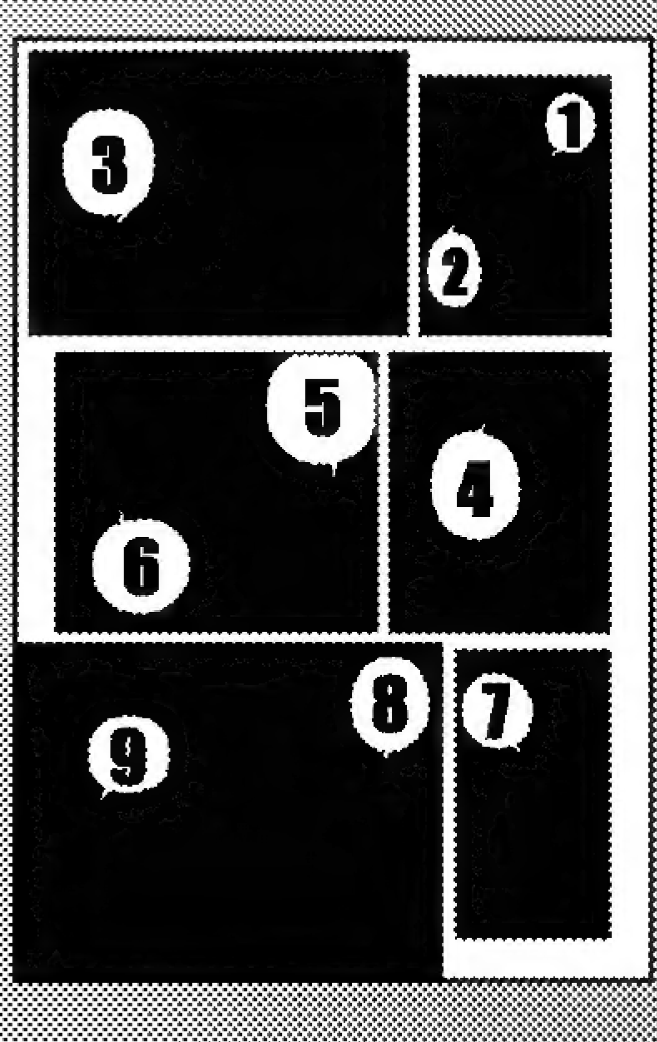
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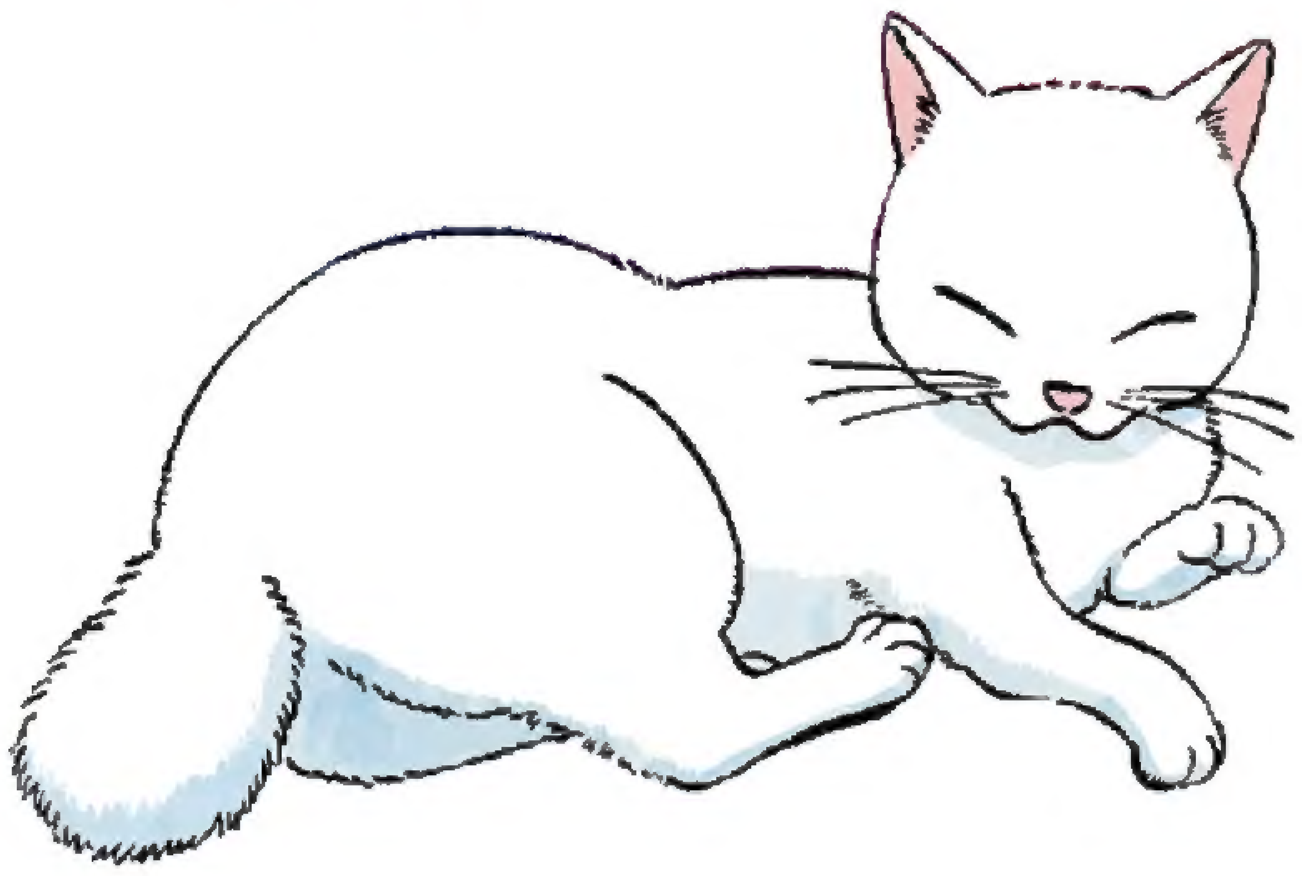
READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



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Big-City Chills and Thrills





It's wintertime in Tokyo! Even as Mitsumi juggles Valentine's Day infatuations and White Day revelations, the high school life of this natural-born happiness influencer is hurtling headlong towards spring—and her second year in high school!



TEEN (13+)

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